

**From:** Christine Kelly [kellyc126@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, 4 July 2011 3:42 PM  
**To:** BA - Plant Biosecurity Contact  
**Subject:** Imports

Dear Sir

I am an employee of an apple orchard in Batlow NSW. I have great concerns about the processes involved in allowing apple imports into Australia. I am particularly amazed and dismayed at the processes involved in this issue.

It seems that if there is a "known unknown" (apologies to Donald Rumsfeld) Biosecurity Australia will define the potential risk from that unknown as negligible.

That is not science – that is risk management of the worst kind.

There are very few countries that avoid being infected with Fire Blight if they import fruit from a Fire Blight infected country. It seems that the mechanisms for this infestation are not fully known but what is known is that it happens. If something is transferred from A to B, you cannot just say that it should not have happened and you cannot say the risk of that happening is negligible.

There are no procedures in place to identify Fire Blight when it does enter Australia so that it will become rampant within a very short time. There are no educational programs in place for Australian orchardists to learn how to identify Fire Blight. There is no program in place to disseminate knowledge about Fire Blight and what the orchardists should do if they suspect they may have the disease. It seems that very little reference has been made to the Beale report.

There is no research on the impact of Fire Blight on our native flora and subsequently on native fauna.

There has been no investigation of the procedures that New Zealand follows to exclude Fire Blight – their procedures have been accepted with no investigation under claims that they are proprietary. How can an Australian grower have any confidence in something that has not even been investigated by Biosecurity? Are New Zealand orchardists audited on any of their procedures? What are the outcomes of that auditing process (if it exists)? Is there any external evidence to show that New Zealand orchardists are following any procedures for the containment of Fire Blight?

Australia has always had a great advantage in having a natural barrier to exotic diseases. Now we have a situation where that natural advantage is being thrown away.

There are enough serious concerns to call for this entire importation process to be reviewed. It must be reviewed now. We do not need another "uncontrolled experiment" similar to the Myrtle Rust situation that we are experiencing now.

Yours faithfully  
Christine Kelly