

Technical & Administrative Services

We are concerned with suggested protocols for inspection of orchards for fire blight that wish to export apples to Australia. Inspections only at blossoming time is not enough.

As literature shows, US blossoming time in spring is the most common for outbreaks of fire blight. The risk of further outbreaks continues through the season, therefore I think regular inspections of orchards must be completed right up to the time of harvest.

Blossoming in spring is a high risk time for fire blight as it has an entry point to the tree. This is the same when the foliage is damaged. Research shows that torn and shredded leaves create entry points for the disease. Foliage damage can occur through hail storms or heavy insect infestation.

With the IRA report fully focused on NZ apples, why do we not look at what fire blight will do to the pear industry if were to get this dreadful disease as pears are more susceptible.

In addition, apples coming from NZ should be labelled with the processes of fumigation, chlorine dips and antibiotics for the consumers to see.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the decision process.

Rohan Gilmour
Gilmours Orchards
Paracombe SA