

25th May, 2007

Branch Support
Plant Biosecurity
Biosecurity Australia
GPO Box 858
Canberra
ACT 2601

Re- Banana Import from Philippines

It is with the gravest concern that I protest against your current draft for the importation of fresh bananas from the Philippines.

My major points of concern are;

1. Who will administer and undertake the quarantine and inspection conditions proposed?
2. The absence of Tropical Race 4 Panama disease as a concern.

My nine years as a technical specialist with the international banana company, Chiquita, exposed me to the corrupt nature of the personal that manage and are involved with these overseas banana operations.

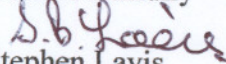
We, as members of the Australian Banana Industry, will be unable to trust any person or organisation, other than our own Australian people, to be in a position of responsibility of determining that the level of quarantine has not been breached. This applies particularly to inspections at the growing and packaging areas.

Make no mistake, we are talking about "banana republics" that are controlled by a gun and corruption is a way of life.

Likewise, my concern with the presence of Tropical Race 4 Panama disease in the banana growing areas of the Philippines. This disease is one of the worst known to the industry with no cure. I urge you to consider the possibility of it entering our country.

Please register my concerns when considering this import issue and register myself as a stake holder on this matter.

Yours Faithfully


Stephen Lavis