

## **The Hon Wendy Lovell MP**

**Member for North Eastern Province**

Shadow Spokesperson for Consumer Affairs ■ Shadow Spokesperson for Women's Affairs



Friday, 24 March 2006

Technical and Administrative Services  
Plant Biosecurity  
Biosecurity Australia  
GPO BOX 858  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

03-31-06P01:35 RCVD

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to express my opposition to the possible importation of New Zealand Apples and to express my concern over aspects of the Biosecurity Australia Import Risk Analysis (IRA) document.

In my position as State Member of Parliament for the North Eastern Province, I am fully aware of the impact an outbreak of the Fireblight Disease would have on the constituents in my region. I have had lengthy discussions with locals and industry representatives from this fruit growing region about such adverse impacts.

I do not believe the IRA goes far enough to ensure Australia and our region would be protected against a possible outbreak of Fireblight should New Zealand apples be approved for importation. I have grave concerns that the protocols for inspection of orchards at blossom time still leave the possibility of disease outbreak between blossom and harvest. It is well documented that Fireblight outbreaks are possible during blossoming and harvesting, not just during spring.

Further, orchards that have been damaged (by hail, insects, etc) should be required to undergo an inspection as damaged plants can be more susceptible to Fireblight.

The Goulburn Valley grows approximately 90% of Australia's Pears and approximately 25% of Australian Apples and it has been estimated that horticulture contributes approximately 30% of the wealth generated by the Goulburn Irrigation System. To have an outbreak of Fireblight in this area would have devastating effects on the local economy, with the adverse flow on effects impossible to quantify.



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I also have concerns about the risk of an outbreak of European Canker in our region, should New Zealand apples be imported under the current IRA guidelines. Fruit must be excluded for export from high risk areas in New Zealand to prevent such an outbreak here.

I care deeply about my local region, the people in it and the regional economy. It is in this manner that I have written to you to ensure you are fully aware of the economic impact that Fireblight would have on this region and to add my support to the submissions provided by constituents and industry bodies in my province and the wider community.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to voice my opinion on this issue and I look forward to hearing a positive outcome for our local horticultural industry.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Lovell', written in a cursive style.

**Wendy Lovell MP**  
**Member for North Eastern Province**