



Australian Government
Biosecurity Australia

3 November 2006

BIOSECURITY AUSTRALIA POLICY MEMORANDUM 2006/32
REVISED CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPORTATION OF
CALIFORNIAN TABLE GRAPES

This Biosecurity Australia Policy Memorandum informs stakeholders that the current requirement for mandatory methyl bromide fumigation of table grapes imported from California has been reviewed based on data and information since trade commenced in 2002. The review concluded that there was no technical justification to maintain this requirement in addition to other stringent quarantine conditions that remain in place. The revised policy that removes this mandatory requirement subject to a range of continuing conditions is expected to come into effect 14 days after the date of this notification.

Biosecurity Australia (BA) has reviewed the policy for imports of table grapes from California and concluded that there is no technical justification to maintain the existing mandatory requirement for methyl bromide fumigation. This requirement will therefore be removed subject to the continuing application of other stringent quarantine conditions.

Biosecurity Australia has reviewed the data from the commencement of trade in 2002 on pests intercepted during routine pre-clearance inspections in California, and on pests detected from all table grape shipments inspected under an intensive destructive sampling protocol implemented in October 2005. This interception data did not identify any pests which routinely require mandatory methyl bromide fumigation. There have been no detections of glassy winged sharpshooter since the inception of the trade.

Importations will be closely monitored for 12 months through identification of all live arthropods intercepted by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) detected during pre-clearance inspections; and repetition of the destructive sampling regime implemented by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. At the conclusion of the monitoring period (or earlier if warranted), BA will review the new arrangements to ensure the risks are being appropriately managed.

Standard AQIS procedures, pre-clearance inspections and other measures will continue to effectively manage the quarantine risk posed by table grapes from California. Only consignments inspected by AQIS in California and found free of live quarantine pests will be cleared for export.

The following phytosanitary measures will remain in place for all imports of table grapes from California to mitigate the risk of the introduction of quarantine pests:

- Registration of vineyards and fumigation facilities.
- Pest Free Area and Non-Host Status for specified quarantine pests.
- Labelling requirements for palletised and non-palletised table grapes.

- Forced air fumigation with 1% SO₂ and 6% CO₂ for 30 minutes (or equivalent treatment) to mitigate the risk of introduction of spiders which pose a risk to human health.
- AQIS pre-clearance inspection and freedom from quarantine pests in California prior to shipment.
- The detection of pests that are managed by pest free area or non host status during pre-clearance inspections will result in suspension of trade.
- The detection of a live glassy-winged sharpshooter (*Homalodisca coagulata*) during pre-clearance inspection will result in suspension of all exports until the problem is investigated.
- The detection of a dead glassy-winged sharpshooter during pre-clearance inspection will result in investigation by AQIS and APHIS to evaluate the association of *H. coagulata* with the table grape importation pathway.
- 600 unit inspection sample.
- Phytosanitary certification.
- On-arrival consignment verification.

Removal of the mandatory requirement will be accompanied by the addition of other safeguards, as outlined below.

- Monitoring of the outcome for 12 months through identification of all live arthropods intercepted by AQIS detected during pre-clearance inspections; and repetition of the destructive sampling regime proposed by APHIS for the 2005 season.
- Amendment of the pest list to include the spiders *Latrodectus* species (black widow spiders) and *Cheiracanthium* species (yellow sac spiders) as actionable pests.
- If egg sacs of spiders that pose a risk to human health are detected during pre-clearance inspection, all subsequent consignments from the source vineyards will be subject to mandatory CH₃Br fumigation before export to Australia for the remainder of the season.
- Maintenance of a strict allowable tolerance for trash. We have identified the presence of leaf material as a potential pathway for pests of quarantine concern, namely eggs of the glassy-winged sharpshooter, *Homalodisca coagulata*. Therefore, in the absence of mandatory methyl bromide fumigation consignments must not contain any leaf material of grape vine (*V. vinifera*) or weeds.
- Revision of the procedures for weed species.

Stakeholders should direct any questions regarding this revision to the contact officer below, prior to the date of effect.

Consultation

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should get in touch with the contact officer (details below).

Information on risk assessments and policy reviews being conducted by Biosecurity Australia is available from our website www.biosecurityaustralia.gov.au.

Confidentiality

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to policy memorandums will be publicly available. Comments may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of their identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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