



16 March 2015

Biosecurity Advice 2015/03

Draft review of policy: importation of *Phytophthora ramorum* host propagative material into Australia

This Biosecurity Advice (BA) invites stakeholders to provide comments on the 'Draft review of policy: importation of *Phytophthora ramorum* host propagative material into Australia' by 29 April 2015.

Background

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture initiated this review following a request from the Australian nursery industry to revise the import conditions for nursery stock from countries where *Phytophthora ramorum* is known to occur. Surveys conducted overseas in response to *P. ramorum* outbreaks identified several new species of *Phytophthora* including *P. kernoviae*, *P. nemorosa* and *P. pseudosyringae*. These *Phytophthora* species share a similar host range, geographic range and cause symptoms indistinguishable from those of *Phytophthora ramorum*. This review therefore considers not only *Phytophthora ramorum* but also *P. kernoviae*, *P. nemorosa* and *P. pseudosyringae*.

The introduction of these *Phytophthora* species into Australia would have unacceptable economic consequences. *Phytophthora ramorum* is the most destructive pathogen of oaks and a range of other host plants with significant commercial value, causing direct host mortality and increasing the cost of production due to its regulatory impact. The Department of Agriculture has therefore undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the scientific literature to review the appropriateness of the existing policy for the importation of propagative material for these *Phytophthora* hosts.

Proposed measures

The Department of Agriculture has reviewed the existing policy and proposed several changes, including:

- Updating the host list for *Phytophthora ramorum* and including hosts of *P. kernoviae*, *P. nemorosa* and *P. pseudosyringae*.
- Reducing the post-entry quarantine (PEQ) growth period for dormant cuttings and budwood from 24 months to 15 months with visual screening, culturing and active testing for all four *Phytophthora* species using molecular techniques including but not limited to polymerase chain reaction (PCR).

- Allowing the importation of one year old, bare-rooted plants without foliage. On arrival, the bare rooted plants will be subject to inspection, fumigation, culturing, molecular testing (generic *Phytophthora* PCR) to screen for *Phytophthora* species and sodium hypochlorite treatment. This will be followed by 15 months growth in PEQ with visual inspection and molecular testing including but not limited to PCR.

The existing conditions for propagative material from countries where these *Phytophthora* species are not known to occur are proposed to continue.

These proposed measures will protect Australia's industries from this destructive pathogen while also allowing the industry to have access to new varieties from overseas.

The ultimate goal of Australia's phytosanitary measures is to protect plant health and prevent the introduction of identified quarantine pests and pathogens associated with plant propagative material. The department considers that the risk management measures proposed in this draft review of policy will be adequate to mitigate the risks posed by the *Phytophthora* species under review.

The *Draft review of policy: importation of Phytophthora ramorum host propagative material into Australia* is available on the department's website at agriculture.gov.au/ba. The Department of Agriculture invites comments on the technical aspects of the proposed risk management measures for *Phytophthora* spp. host propagative material. In particular, comments are sought on their appropriateness and any other measures stakeholders consider would provide equivalent risk management outcomes.

Comments on the draft report should be submitted by 29 April 2015 to:

Plant Biosecurity
Australian Government Department of Agriculture
GPO Box 858
Canberra ACT 2601
AUSTRALIA

Telephone: +61 2 6272 5094
Facsimile: +61 2 6272 3307
Email: plant@agriculture.gov.au

The draft report is available at [Biosecurity Risk Analysis](#)

The Department of Agriculture will consider all submissions received on the draft review in finalising the review of policy.

Please pass this notice to other interested parties. If those parties wish to be included in future communications on this matter they should contact Plant Biosecurity.

Louise van Meurs
A/g First Assistant Secretary
Plant Division

Contact: David Heinrich
Telephone: +61 2 6272 3220
Facsimile: +61 2 6272 3307
Email: plant@agriculture.gov.au

Confidentiality

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

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