

DIRECTOR OF ANIMAL AND PLANT QUARANTINE

IMPORTATION OF CALIFORNIAN TABLE GRAPES

POLICY DETERMINATION

Background

1. In January 2000 the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) completed an import risk analysis (IRA) on imports of fresh table grapes from California. The IRA report recommended that imports be permitted subject to a series of import measures to address the risks of introduction of quarantinable pests and diseases.
2. In July 2000, additional information was sought relating to further outbreaks of Pierce's disease (PD) in grapevines, the spread of its vector the glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) and government measures taken to address the PD/GWSS situation in California. In consultation with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), stakeholders and officials from relevant US agencies, Biosecurity Australia reassessed the risks and developed a revised set of import measures to address the changed risk profile.
3. The measures detailed in this determination for the importation of Californian table grapes meet Australia's appropriate level of protection for biosecurity.

Policy determination

4. The determination of policy regarding measures for the importation of fresh table grapes from California is as follows:

Item 1. Registration of vineyards and fumigation facilities

All table grapes for export must be sourced only from registered export vineyards. APHIS¹ is required to register all export vineyards and export fumigation facilities prior to commencement of exports to enable trace-back in the event of non-compliance. Fumigation facilities are required to comply with APHIS standards for export grade facilities. Copies of the registration records must be provided to AQIS.

Item 2. "Pest Free Area" and "Non-Host Status" quarantine pests

Scientific evidence indicating the absence of pests from areas designated as "Pest Free Area" or where "Non-Host Status" applies in California (Attachment 1) has been provided by APHIS. APHIS must verify maintenance

¹ The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture

of such status for these pests by routine crop monitoring/surveillance. Biosecurity Australia must be notified immediately of any change in the “Pest Free Area” or “Non-Host” status of any of these pests.

Item 3. Notice of Intent to Export

A Notice of Intention to Export (NOI) will be the primary document that confirms preclearance of Californian table grape shipments.

The exporter/freight forwarder must complete a NOI prior to any pre-clearance. The NOI will describe the pallets (by pallet card number or other method approved by AQIS) that the exporter wants included in the inspection lot².

Participants³ are to keep appropriate records to enable trace back of product from the NOI issued, through the packhouse (including pallet identification) to each supplying grower.

Item 4. Table grape packing and labelling compliance

All table grapes for export must be free from trash and weed seeds. Trash refers to soil, splinters, twigs, leaves and other plant material. Table grapes should be packed into perforated transparent, polyvinyl bags and placed into new Toyon Kraft Veneer (TKV) boxes. The wooden slats for the TKV boxes must be of processed wood, veneer or chipboard and must not be more than three months old when sourced from USA or not more than 21 days old when sourced from Mexico. No unprocessed packing material of plant origin will be allowed. All wood material used in packaging of table grapes must comply with the conditions stipulated in “Cargo containers quarantine aspects and procedures” (AQIS, 1996) and as contained in the AQIS “ICON” database.

All boxes must be labelled with the vineyard registration number and boxes/pallets with fumigation facility number. Stacking of boxes on pallets must be done in such a way as to facilitate permeation and diffusion of fumigant through the entire pallet. The pallets should be securely strapped only after phytosanitary inspection has been carried out following mandatory post-harvest treatments.

Palletised product is to be identified by attaching a uniquely numbered pallet card to each pallet or part pallet to enable trace back to growers.

Pallet cards must be securely fastened to the pallet in order to withstand handling to the ports of export/import. (Note: If pallet cards are not affixed or cannot be located on arrival in Australia the pallet will not be considered pre-cleared).

² A lot is the quantity of units (bunches) of grapes identifiable by its homogeneity of composition, vineyard, fumigation facility, etc. A lot may form part of a consignment, or comprise the entire consignment.

³ A “participant” is any treatment facility or other entity that is registered by APHIS for the purpose of Californian table grapes exports to Australia.

Item 5. Pre-shipment fumigation

All export shipments must undergo mandatory pre-shipment fumigation with a mixture of sulphur dioxide and carbon dioxide followed by fumigation with methyl bromide.

Palletised table grapes must be treated with a mixture of 1% sulphur dioxide and 6% carbon dioxide for 30 minutes delivered using forced air. This must be completed prior to phytosanitary inspection and be supervised by APHIS or an accredited certifying official.

Table grapes must be fumigated with methyl bromide at registered fumigation facilities that are audited by APHIS. All registered establishments will undergo fumigation testing to ensure that the chambers can deliver and maintain methyl bromide fumigation in accordance with the applicable USDA standards.

Records of chamber testing must be made available to AQIS if required.

Once a chamber has demonstrated its ability to hold gas via Fumiscope readings, commercial treatment can proceed subject to having successfully completed and verified three consecutive fumigation treatments. The gas concentrations in the first three fumigation events will be recorded by Fumiscope at three points in the chamber in the presence of inspectors from both AQIS and APHIS. All other procedures shall be conducted in accordance with USDA/APHIS/PPQ Treatment Manual.

Fumigation with methyl bromide must be carried out for a duration of 2 hours according to the specifications below:

- 40g/m³ (2.5 lbs/1000 ft³) at a grape pulp temperature of 26.5°C (80⁰F) or greater;
- 48g/m³ at a grape pulp temperature of 21°C (70⁰F) or greater but less than 26.5°C (80⁰F);
- 64g/m³ at a grape pulp temperature of 15.5°C (60⁰F) or greater but less than 21°C (70⁰F).

Product is not to be fumigated if the grape pulp temperature is below 15.5°C (60⁰F). The loading ratio should not exceed 80% of the chamber volume.

Ten pallets selected at random from the lot will have a sample carton withdrawn (under APHIS/AQIS supervision) for the purposes of measuring product temperature.

Where product has been subject to cool storage, at least two sample cartons/boxes will be drawn from the second or third layer (from the bottom of the pallet) and the bunch of grapes will be selected from the centre of that carton. The temperature of the grapes from each sample will be measured and recorded.

The lowest temperature recorded from the number of pallets in the lot will be the temperature that will be used to calculate the methyl bromide dosage rate.

Fumigation establishments will ensure that there are records that identify each treatment lot and include details of the actual fumigation for each lot treated.

All data pertaining to the fumigation treatment will be recorded. The number and identification of pallets to be treated, the time and date of the treatment, the temperature data from each pallet as tested above, the lowest temperature recorded, the MB dose rate as calculated and reference to the chamber capacity and the volume of product treated.

An AQIS inspector will monitor all fumigation treatments.

Fumigation establishments will ensure that they have systems in place that will assure that treated and untreated product is identified and segregated at all times whilst on the premises.

Item 6. Phytosanitary Inspection by AQIS

Participants are to remove pallets or packages from cool-store as directed by AQIS. This will be on a random basis so all pallets in the lot must be in the one place and accessible at the time of inspection.

AQIS will undertake pre-clearance inspection of lots submitted by participants.

Sufficient cartons/boxes will be selected at random from the nominated lot to ensure a 920-bunch inspection can be completed. If lots are less than 1000 units a 450-bunch inspection regime will be applied. The number of carton/boxes inspected to obtain the 920 or 450 bunches will be recorded.

All fruit will be removed from each selected carton/box and the empty carton/box examined for debris, leaf material and live pests.

Inspection will require that each bunch be individually examined. Limited destructive sampling may be required to break open tight bunches. The full 920 bunches selected for inspection will be completed regardless of whether a weed seed or black widow spider is found earlier in the inspection. In the event that a live quarantine pest (Attachment 2) is detected during inspection, the inspection will cease. The lot will be rejected and a follow up investigation will be conducted to determine the cause of the problem. The participant may elect to have the lot retreated (if that is possible), or withdrawn from the Australian program.

Lots must be free from seeds of specified weed species and genera that are of quarantine concern to Australia (Attachment 3).

The inspected cartons/boxes will be practically free of trash and if not the lot will be rejected from the Australian program. There is a nil tolerance for fresh leaf material.

Participants are to reassemble pallets immediately after completion of preclearance inspection.

AQIS may direct APHIS to suspend a fumigation facility should live quarantine pests, including non-host status pests be detected during inspections. The suspended facility may be reinstated pending favourable results of an investigation conducted by USDA/ APHIS.

The detection of a live GWSS will require suspension of the table grape export program. Restoration of the program will only occur when the problem has been fully investigated and Biosecurity Australia is satisfied that appropriate corrective action has been taken.

Lots that fail AQIS inspection must be clearly identified with a label indicating that the lot is rejected for export to Australia. Rejected product must be physically separated in store from other table grapes, which are either awaiting AQIS inspection or have passed AQIS inspection. Separation distance must be a minimum of 1 metre in all directions from other products under ambient temperature storage conditions, or a minimum of 100mm in all directions in a cool storage environment.

Product rejected for Australian quarantine purposes, is not eligible for export to Australia.

If product continually fails inspection, AQIS reserves the right to suspend the export program and conduct an audit of the table grape systems that are in place. The program will only continue once Biosecurity Australia is satisfied appropriate corrective action has been taken.

If the lot passes inspection, the AQIS officer will sign and stamp the NOI. The original is to be retained by the AQIS officer and copies provided to APHIS (or accredited certifying official) and the participant. Other copies specific to each consignment⁴ must be highlighted to identify which pallets from the original inspection lot are included in a consignment. Such copies will be attached to the appropriate phytosanitary certificate accompanying each specific consignment. Participants may use copies of the NOI as inventory worksheets.

Item 7. Storage

Packed product and packaging is to be protected from pest recontamination during and after packing, packhouse to cool storage, to depot/consolidation point, to fumigation treatment centre, to pre-clearance inspection point, then to shipment point (i.e. at all distribution points).

Pre-cleared lots must be maintained in secured conditions segregated by a minimum of 1 metre from rejected lots, non-inspected table grapes or other

⁴ A consignment is the number of boxes of table grapes covered by one international phytosanitary certificate shipped via one port in California to a designated port in Australia for one consignee on the same vessel on the same day.

fruit. In a cool storage environment a clear space of 100mm in all directions from other products will suffice.

When pre-cleared fruit or fruit intended for pre-clearance is transported from an approved packhouse/cool store it must be protected from pest recontamination. If product is not transported in a separate truck then an APHIS approved barrier needs to be inserted between pre-cleared products or product intended for pre-clearance and any other fruit.

Item 8. Phytosanitary certification

Prepared phytosanitary certificates are to be submitted to APHIS/AQIS with the following information:

Additional Declarations:

- A declaration stating “the grapes in this consignment have been produced in California in accordance with the conditions governing the entry of fresh table grapes from California to Australia”.
- A declaration stating “AQIS Pre-clearance inspection undertaken in California in accordance with the *Work plan for the pre-clearance of Californian table grapes to Australia, December 2001*”.

Distinguishing marks:

- This section will include the container numbers or aircraft flight number (where known) and seal numbers for sea freight shipments.

Treatments:

- Details of pre-shipment methyl bromide fumigation including dosage, treatment duration, grape pulp temperature and date.
- The name of the fumigation treatment facility in the “additional information” section.

Item 9. Western Australia

State Legislation in Western Australia currently prohibits the importation of fresh table grapes from areas where downy mildew disease occurs, including other States and Territories of Australia. This legislation is being reviewed and will be amended as necessary following completion of a risk analysis jointly being done by Biosecurity Australia and quarantine authorities in Western Australia. Conditions for the importation of table grapes from California into Western Australia will be determined following completion of that review. In the meantime, the importation of table grapes from California into Western Australia will not be permitted.

Item 10. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed after the first year of trade.

5. This policy is relevant to the making of decisions on imports of fresh table grapes from California in accordance with the *Quarantine Act 1908* and the

Quarantine Proclamation 1998 (Proclamation). The measures are designed to limit the quarantine risk to a level, which is acceptably low consistent with section 70 of the Proclamation.

Michael Taylor

Director of Animal and Plant Quarantine
for the purposes of the *Quarantine Act 1908*.

12 February 2002

ATTACHMENT 1

Pests absent from areas designated as “Pest Free Area” (PFA) or for which “Non-Host Status” (NHS) applies.

Pest	Common name	Official control program in California	Presence in California	Presence in Australia
Insects				
<i>Ceratitis capitata</i>	Medfly	Pest Free Area	No	Yes (official control)
<i>Craponius inaequalis</i>	Grape curculio	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Eulithis diversilineata</i>	Grape looper	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Fidia viticida</i>	Grape root worm	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Polychrosis viteana</i>	Grape berry moth	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Tetranychus mcdanieli</i>	Mcdaniel spider mite	Non Host Status	Yes (not on grapes)	No
<i>Scirtothrips perseae</i>	Californian thrips	Non Host Status	Yes (not on grapes)	No
Diseases				
<i>Guignardia bidwellii</i>	Black rot	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Mycosphaerella angulata</i>	Angular leaf spot	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Physopella ampelopsidis</i>	Rust	Pest Free Area	No	No
<i>Pseudopezicula tetraspora</i>	Angular leaf scorch	Pest Free Area	No	No

ATTACHMENT 2

Pests of Quarantine Significance Associated With Californian Table Grapes

Quarantine Pest	Common Name
<i>Amyelois transitella</i>	Navel orange worm
<i>Argyrotaenia citrana</i>	Orange tortrix
<i>Caliothrips fasciatus</i>	Bean thrips
<i>Colomerus vitis</i> – strain c	Grape leaf bud mite - leaf curl strain
<i>Desmia funeralis</i>	Grape leaf-folder
<i>Drepanothrips reuteri</i>	Eastern flower thrips
<i>Eotetranychus carpini</i>	Hornbeam mite
<i>Eotetranychus willamettei</i>	Willamette spider mite
<i>Estigmene acrea</i>	Salt marsh caterpillar
<i>Euschistus conspersus</i>	Conspere stink bug
<i>Frankliniella minuta</i>	Minute flower thrips
<i>Frankliniella occidentalis</i>	Western flower thrips
<i>Harrisina brillians</i>	Western grape leaf skeletoniser
<i>Homalodisca coagulata</i>	Glassy winged sharp shooter
<i>Planococcus ficus</i>	Vine mealybug
<i>Platynota stultana</i>	Omnivorous leaf roller
<i>Pseudococcus maritimus</i>	Grapevine mealybug
<i>Scirtothrips citri</i>	California citrus thrips
<i>Tetranychus pacificus</i>	Pacific spider mite

ATTACHMENT 3

Weeds of Quarantine Significance to Australia Associated with California Table Grapes

Amsinckia intermedia
Cenchrus spp
Eremocarpus setigerus
Euphorbia maculata
Xanthium strumarium var. *canadense*

Seed with the potential to acts as vectors for seedborne diseases of Quarantine Significance to Australia Associated with California Table Grapes

Chloris virgata
Digitaria sanguinalis
Lactuca serriola
Sorghum halepense