



ANNOUNCEMENT INFORMATION PAPER – COMMENCEMENT OF A REVIEW OF BIOSECURITY IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR GREENHOUSE-GROWN ORIENTAL MELON AND ROCKMELON FRUIT FROM THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The commencement of this risk analysis is in response to a request for market access for greenhouse-grown oriental melon (*Cucumis melo* var. *makuwa*) and rockmelon (*Cucumis melo* var. *cantalupo*) fruit from the Republic of Korea (ROK) into Australia. Access for greenhouse-grown oriental melon and rockmelon fruit is ROK's highest horticultural market access priority.

There are two main types of risk analyses conducted by the department:

- a Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis (BIRA) which is conducted through a regulated process provided for in the [Biosecurity Act 2015](#) (the Act) and the [Biosecurity Regulation 2016](#)
- a risk analysis conducted for the purposes of Section 174 of the Act, (such as a review of biosecurity import requirements) (formally known as a non-regulated risk analysis).

A preliminary assessment of the pests potentially associated with fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK has identified that the pests of potential biosecurity concern are the same as, or of the same pest groups, as those pests that have been assessed previously by the department on other horticultural commodities.

Given the similarity of pests of concern, and that there are appropriate risk management measures already established for these pests or pest groups, the risk analysis for greenhouse-grown fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK does not meet the criteria for being conducted as a BIRA. Subsequently it will be progressed as a review of biosecurity import requirements. This is consistent with the Act and the [Biosecurity Import Risk Analysis Guidelines 2016](#).

Commodity to be assessed

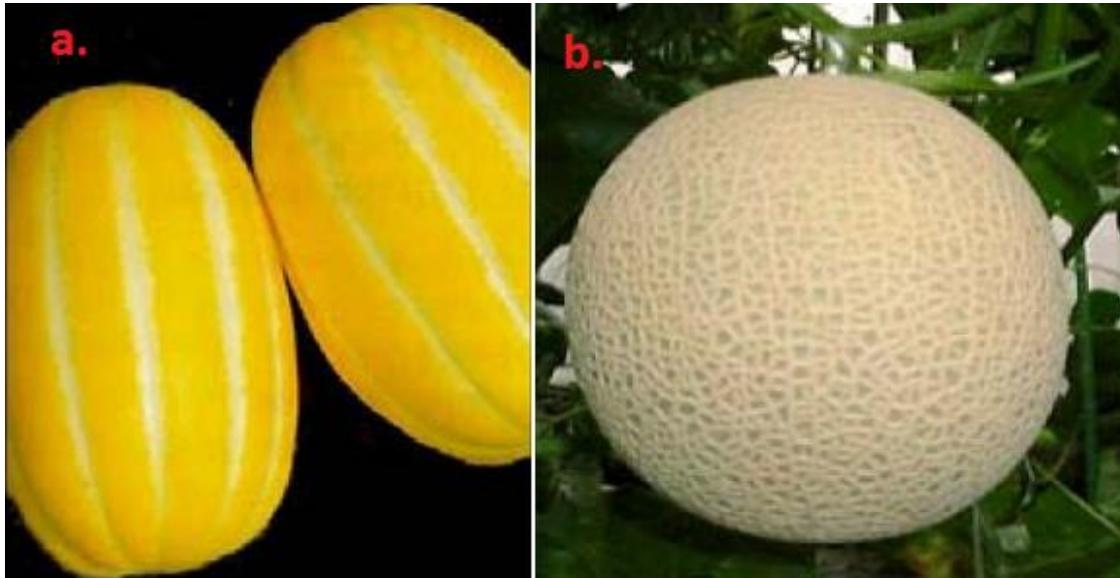
The risk analysis will assess the biosecurity risks associated with the importation of greenhouse-grown fresh oriental melon (*Cucumis melo* var. *makuwa*) rockmelon (*Cucumis melo* var. *cantalupo*) fruit from ROK into Australia for human consumption. See figure 1.

Oriental melons and rockmelons are varieties of melons (*Cucumis melo*). Melon plants are a trailing vine plant that belongs to the Cucurbitaceae family. Melon fruit are large and round, oval or elliptical in shape. However, the fruit varies in size, shape, surface texture, flesh colour and flavour depending on the variety. The edible part of the fruit is the soft flesh beneath the rind and surrounding the seeds.



Figure 1 a. Oriental melon fruits; b. rockmelon fruit

Note: images are not to scale



Melon industry in the Republic of Korea

Production of oriental melon and rockmelon in ROK occurs throughout the country. Melon production in ROK is typically conducted in greenhouses, providing control for temperature, moisture and pest management.

Greenhouse grown oriental melons are produced in ROK with a peak season from March to June, which can be extended into August. Rockmelon in ROK are grown with a peak season from June to October with some variation in planting date.

In 2016, oriental melon yields of approximately 32 tonnes per hectare were reported in ROK. In the same year, rockmelon yields of around 24 tonnes per hectare were reported.

ROK currently exports oriental melon and rockmelon fruit to a number of countries, with the main export markets including Japan, Thailand and the EU.

Table 1 Main oriental melon and rockmelon production regions in ROK in 2016 (APQA 2018)

Commodity	Production area (ha)	Production yield (M/T)	Export volume(M/T)
Oriental Melon	4,782	153,828	137
Rockmelon	1,498	36,937	945

Melon industry in Australia

Fresh melon fruit are grown in almost every state and territory of Australia, with the exception of the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania.

The Australian Melon industry produces around 217, 000 tonnes of melons annually across an area of around 8,500 hectares. Queensland and New South Wales are the largest producing states, although Western Australia and Northern territory also produce significant quantities of melons. Victoria and South Australia produce lower but still significant volumes of melons.



The major melon varieties produced in Australia are rockmelons, honeydew melons and watermelons. In 2017/2018, around 45,480 tonnes of melons (rockmelon and honeydew) were produced in Australia with a value of close to \$50 million. Of this, rockmelons accounted for 85% of production.

Melons, including rockmelons, are produced all year round in Australia. The main production period for rockmelons is from August to April with the peak production period occurring during the summer months of February and March. Although rockmelons are produced during the winter months of May to June, the production volume is low.

Australian melon imports

Since 2014 Australia has only imported 14 tonnes of rockmelon from the USA. This trade was valued at less than \$100,000. In the two years following Australia has not imported any significant quantity of rockmelon.

Trade between Australia and ROK

Total food and agriculture exports to ROK in FY2017/2018 were valued at \$3.2 billion. ROK is a major market for Australian beef and veal (\$1.2 billion), sugar (\$620 million) and barley (\$90 million) as well as wool, dairy, fish and wood products. Horticultural trade to ROK amounted to \$45 million in the 2017/2018 financial year, of which \$12.8 million was fruit.

Horticultural imports from ROK in the 2017/2018 financial year were valued at approximately \$17 million. Approximately \$14.2 million of which was from vegetable imports, approximately \$1.16 million was from coffee, tea and spice imports and approximately \$1.5 million of horticultural imports were fruit. The remainder of horticultural imports from ROK were for other commodities including tree nuts and amounted to approximately \$470,000 value.

Preliminary assessment of oriental melon and rockmelon from ROK

A preliminary assessment identified that the pests associated with fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK do not pose different biosecurity risks to those associated with other horticultural commodities.

The preliminary assessment of the pests associated with oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK indicates that the pests of potential biosecurity concern (as assessed to date) to be a fruit fly, a tetranychid mite, thrips, and pathogen species. Further assessment of these potential pests will determine which potential pests are pests of biosecurity concern that require phytosanitary measures to achieve Australia's appropriate level of protection.

The pests associated with fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK (as assessed to date) are expected to require similar risk management measures to those already used to control these pests and pest groups for other horticultural commodities.

Next steps

A draft report of this review of biosecurity import requirements will be published on the department's website, <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/risk-analysis/plant/melons-from-korea>. Stakeholders will have an opportunity to submit comments on the draft report for a period of 60 calendar days.



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources**

All comments received on the draft report will be assessed and, where relevant, amendments will be incorporated into the final report.

The recommendations in the final report will reflect the completion of the risk analysis for fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK. The recommended measures will have been assessed as appropriate to manage any potential risks to Australia's biosecurity presented by the import of fresh oriental melon and rockmelon fruit from ROK.

If you would like to know more about this review or the risk analysis review process please email plantstakeholders@agriculture.gov.au or phone +61 2 6272 5094.