

List of recommendations

Recommendation 1

2.47 The committee recommends that the Government create a single, independent, statutory authority – separate from the Department of Agriculture – with responsibility for quarantine and biosecurity policy and operations.

Recommendation 2

2.48 The recommends that the Government ensure that Australia's import risk analysis process is consultative, scientifically based, politically independent, transparent, consistent, harmonised and subject to appeal on process.

Recommendation 3

3.83 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture give thorough consideration to the Peace report, as well as the underlying themes of all other recommendations contained in this report, in developing the new biosecurity regulations and guidelines.

Recommendation 4

3.85 The committee recommends that the IRA Handbook should be amended to include full details of techniques available to Department of Agriculture risk analysts and any underlying data or research validating those techniques.

Recommendation 5

3.87 The committee recommends that the IRA Handbook should include an IRA effectiveness checklist similar to that recommended by Mr Peace.

Recommendation 6

3.91 The committee recommends that stakeholders' risk perceptions should be incorporated into risk criteria used to analyse the consequences of a given import risk.

Recommendation 7

3.92 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture consider ways to improve the way it communicates risk (and the risk assessment process) to stakeholders.

Recommendation 8

3.95 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture reconsiders the operation of geographic impacts in the IRA process, and give consideration to developing consequence scales based on, for example, national GDP, percentage of national crop at risk, or viable planting area at risk.

Recommendation 9

4.61 The committee recommends that before commencing the importation of fresh pineapples from Malaysia, the Department of Agriculture should establish to a much greater degree of certainty the degree of post-harvest latency of pineapple fruit collapse and heart rot.

Recommendation 10

4.89 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review its assessment of the probability of importation and the probability of distribution of the *Dickeya* sp. pathogen. If a risk above Australia's ALOP were to emerge from the review, then the committee expects stronger risk management measures would be required. If such risk management measures were not sufficient to reduce the risk to Australia's ALOP, then imports of Malaysian pineapples to Australia should not be permitted.

Recommendation 11

4.100 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review its assessment of the consequences of the establishment of the pineapple heart rot and fruit collapse pathogen *Erwinia chrysanthemi* (pineapple strain, *Dickeya* sp.) in Australia. If a risk above Australia's ALOP were to emerge from the review, then the committee expects stronger risk management measures would be required. If such risk management measures were not sufficient to reduce the risk to Australia's ALOP then imports of Malaysian pineapples to Australia should not be permitted.

Recommendation 12

5.23 The committee recommends that the full reasons and relevant supporting documentation of the Import Market Access Advisory Group should be made publicly available within 30 days of a decision being taken.

Recommendation 13

5.36 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review its assessment of the likelihood of entry, establishment and spread of yam scale. If a risk above Australia's ALOP were to emerge from the review, then the committee expects stronger risk management measures would be required. If such risk management measures were not sufficient to reduce the risk to Australia's ALOP, then imports of Fijian ginger to Australia should not be permitted.

Recommendation 14

5.61 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review its assessment of the likelihood of entry, establishment and spread of the Fijian burrowing nematode variant. If a risk above Australia's ALOP were to emerge from the review, then the committee expects stronger risk management measures would be required. If such risk management measures were not sufficient to reduce the risk to Australia's ALOP, then imports of Fijian ginger to Australia should not be permitted.

Recommendation 15

5.93 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture review its assessment of the consequences of the establishment of the Fijian burrowing nematode variant in Australia. If a risk above Australia's ALOP were to emerge from the review, then the committee expects stronger risk management measures would be required. If such risk management measures were not sufficient to reduce the risk to Australia's ALOP, then imports of Fijian ginger to Australia should not be permitted.

Recommendation 16

5.123 The committee recommends that before an import license is granted, the Department of Agriculture make available to stakeholders the scientific evidence used as the basis for the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures for yam scale.

Recommendation 17

5.124 The committee recommends that if the Department of Agriculture cannot produce such scientific evidence, the mitigation measures for yam scale must be reassessed.

Recommendation 18

5.130 The committee recommends that the draft work plan for importing ginger from Fiji be made available to the Parliament and industry for appropriate scrutiny over a suitable period of time, prior to it being finalised.

Recommendation 19

5.133 The committee recommends that the Import Risk Analysis for fresh ginger from Fiji be recommenced. In recommencing the IRA, DA Biosecurity should ensure that particular attention is paid to:

- (a) the likelihood of the Fijian burrowing nematode variant being imported given:**
 - (i) the potential for the Fijian burrowing nematode variant to be imported via other host crops; and**
 - (ii) the potential for the Fijian burrowing nematode variant to be imported via other non-host crops grown in the same fields as ginger.**
- (b) the consequences of importing the Fijian burrowing nematode variant when the following are taken into account:**
 - (i) the suggestions made in the Peace Report regarding geographic scale for crops that are limited to particular districts or regions due to climatic conditions;**
 - (ii) the greater geographic scale for other host crops grown in Australia that could be susceptible to the Fijian burrowing nematode variant;**
 - (iii) proper consultation with stakeholders for other host crops, who should be fully informed of the Fijian burrowing nematode variant and its unknown pathogenicity to those other host crops; and**
 - (iv) whether there are any effective management measures for the Fijian burrowing nematode variant in other host crops that are grown in Australia.**
- (c) the effectiveness of the proposed mitigation measures, taking into account:**
 - (i) the scientific evidence for the limited effectiveness of methyl bromide treatment when the Fijian burrowing nematode variant is resident inside ginger rhizomes;**
 - (ii) the assessment of the import likelihood, given that the mitigation measures do not guarantee elimination of the Fijian burrowing nematode variant and that inspections will not detect nematodes resident inside the ginger;**

- (iii) the relative effectiveness of the mitigation measure for the Fijian burrowing nematode variant compared to the more common variant; and
- (iv) a comprehensive examination of overseas practices.

Recommendation 20

5.140 The committee recommends that when the IRA is recommended for fresh ginger from Fiji, all relevant pests and diseases should be reassessed.

Recommendation 21

6.32 The committee recommends that, before any fresh ginger is imported from Fiji, the Department of Agriculture use its powers under Regulation 69 of the Quarantine Regulations 2000 to resolve the scientific uncertainty surrounding the burrowing nematode and other possible pathogens.

Recommendation 22

6.33 The committee recommends that the proposed merits review process for IRAs also include decisions by the Department of Agriculture on the exercise of information-gathering and other powers under Regulation 69 of the Quarantine Regulations 2000.

Recommendation 23

6.42 The committee recommends that the Department of Agriculture provide industry stakeholders and/or peak bodies with information relevant to IRA processes directly and without delay (and with sufficient time to respond to IRA timelines).

Recommendation 24

7.118 The committee recommends that, before commencing the importation of fresh potatoes from New Zealand, a formal Import Risk Analysis be conducted for fresh potatoes for processing from New Zealand. In conducting the IRA, DA Biosecurity should ensure that particular attention is paid to:

- the conduct, or commissioning, of scientific research in relation to possible disease pathways for the *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum* pathogen;
- the lack of reliable diagnostic testing for the zebra chip bacteria;

- **the large number of bacteria, fungi, nematodes, arthropods and viruses which are known to occur in New Zealand, and which are of concern to Australian potato producers.**