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Australia

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Senate to Hold Inquiry into NZ Apple Decision 2007

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Report Highlights:

The Federal Government's Senate Rural Affairs committee will examine Biosecurity Australia's policy determination for the importation of New Zealand apples at an inquiry in Canberra on May 9, 2007.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Canberra
[AS]

Ref: AS7017, AS7008, AS6078

The Federal Government's Senate Rural Affairs committee will examine the decision made by Biosecurity Australia to allow apple imports from New Zealand at an inquiry in Canberra on May 9, 2007.

Press reports the import decision triggered much criticism from the committee's Senators, who will now scrutinize the decision and the controversial appeals process at the inquiry.

Chairman of Apple and Pear Australia, Darral Ashton, said, "Important decisions like this should not be made and approved by bureaucrats alone. Past Senate inquiries have found that this department's decisions are less than perfect. Also, the politicians cannot ignore their responsibility. We are sure this decision does not reflect public expectations and there is a lot of disenchantment with the handling of this Import Risk Analysis in the 45 Federal electorates where apples and pears are grown."

Source: www.farmonline.com.au, 4/18/07

Background: On March 27, 2007, Biosecurity Australia (BA) announced it had determined a policy for the importation of apples from New Zealand, as specified in the November 2006 final import risk analysis report for apples from New Zealand. BA further announced a work plan between Australia and New Zealand would be developed which would need to be approved by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service before any import permits will be considered.

Following the February 26 Biosecurity Australia (BA) announcement that the Import Risk Analysis Appeal Panel had disallowed all appeals related to the Final Import Risk Analysis (IRA) Report for Apples from New Zealand, press reported the objections of Apple and Pear Australia Ltd (APAL) on the grounds that the detailed appeal submitted by the apple and pear industry had not been considered. The Chairman of the industry's fire blight task force John Corboy said, "The apple and pear industry will exhaust all avenues available to it to ensure that Australia's pest free status is maintained." As a result APAL called for an immediate Senate inquiry to address this "ludicrous and flawed" IRA appeal process.

For further details see GAIN report AS7017 and previous.

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AS7021	Additional Comments Sought on Nutrition & Health Claims Standard	04/11/07
AS7020	Sugar Annual	04/10/07
AS7018	Ag Down Under Vol. 4	03/27/07
AS7017	Biosecurity Policy Determination - Importation of Apples from New Zealand	03/27/07
AS7016	Grain and Feed Annual	03/27/07
AS7014	Stone Fruit Annual	03/16/07
AS7012	Ag DownUnder Vol. 3, 2007	03/09/07

AS7009	Cotton Quarterly Lockup Report	02/27/07
AS7008	Import Risk Analysis Report for Apples from New Zealand	02/27/07
AS7007	Ag DownUnder Vol. 2, 2007	02/23/07
AS7006	Livestock Semi-Annual	02/20/07
AS7005	Ag DownUnder Vol. 1, 2007	02/02/07
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AS6080	Ag Down Under Vol. 18	12/08/06
AS6079	AWB Veto Power Transferred to Ag Minister for Six Months	12/08/06
AS6078	Final Import Risk Analysis Report for Apples from New Zealand Released	12/01/06
AS6077	Cotton Quarterly Update	11/30/06
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