



June  
2017

# Arriving in Australia

Biosecurity



## Australian biosecurity

Live animals and plants, plant material, animal products and certain food from overseas could introduce some of the world's most damaging pests and diseases into Australia. This could devastate our valuable agriculture and tourism industries and unique environment.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources works with state and territory governments, industry and the community, to maintain Australia's clean and wholesome food supply—at home and abroad. Australia's biosecurity system protects our human, animal and plant health by reducing the risk of unwanted pests and diseases arriving in the country. We all benefit from a strong biosecurity system so we all have a role to play.

## Declare it

You will be given an Incoming Passenger Card before you arrive in Australia. You must comply with the requirement to provide this information. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence.

You must mark **YES** on your card if you are carrying goods that may pose a biosecurity risk. These goods include plant material, animal products and certain food.

A Department of Agriculture and Water Resources biosecurity officer may inspect declared goods during your border clearance.

A biosecurity officer may inspect your baggage, even if you do not declare any goods. They may use X-ray or a detector dog. You must declare or dispose of any goods with a biosecurity risk before inspection. If you do not or make a false declaration on the Incoming Passenger Card, you:

- will be caught
- may be subject to civil penalties
- may be prosecuted, fined more than A\$420 000 and imprisoned for up to 10 years and a get criminal record.

You will not be penalised under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* if you declare **all** goods, even if they are not allowed into Australia.

## Domestic passengers travelling on international flights

Your goods may have been exposed to the aircraft or goods that are subject to biosecurity control. This may affect the level of biosecurity risk associated with your goods. If you are carrying food or other goods of biosecurity concern, the goods may be assessed. Goods that present an unacceptable level of biosecurity risk, regardless of their place of origin, may be subject to biosecurity management activities.

## What happens to goods you declare?

Goods will be inspected by a biosecurity officer who will determine the level of biosecurity risk associated with the goods. You may be required to provide information or documents to enable the biosecurity officer to determine the risk. In many cases goods you declare will be of low risk and the biosecurity officer will return them to you after inspection. However, any goods that may present an unacceptable level of biosecurity risk will be managed in accordance with the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

Depending on the risk, you may:

- pay for the goods to be treated to reduce the biosecurity risk (for example fumigation, gamma irradiation)
- pay to export the goods from Australia, or
- destroy the goods.

The first two options are subject to fees and special conditions may apply.

The Department of Agriculture and Water Resources makes every effort to minimise the risk of damage caused as a result of treatment, but does not accept liability for any damage that may occur to your goods during treatment or export.

You may be able to apply for an import permit (issued by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources before your arrival) for the goods. Import permits may be issued subject to conditions. If you have an import permit for the goods, a biosecurity officer will assess whether the importation complies with the terms and conditions of the import permit.

Some states and territories prohibit the entry of fresh fruit from other parts of Australia.

## On arrival

You must declare certain food, plant material and animal products. This list of examples is not complete.

### Food

- airline food and snacks
- commercially prepared, cooked and raw food and ingredients
- dried fruit and vegetables
- instant noodles and rice
- packaged meals
- herbs and spices
- herbal and traditional medicines, remedies, tonics and herbal teas
- snack foods
- honey and other bee products.

### Dairy and egg products

- infant formula
- dairy products (fresh and powdered) including milk, cheese and 'non-dairy' creamers
- all whole, dried and powdered eggs, and egg products, such as mayonnaise
- egg products including noodles and pasta that are not commercially manufactured.

### Meat, poultry and seafood products

- meat including fresh, dried, frozen, cooked, smoked, salted or preserved—from all animal species
- sausages, salami and sliced meats
- fish and other seafood products.

### Seeds and nuts

- cereal grains, popping corn, nuts, pinecones, birdseed, seeds, and ornaments including seeds.

### Fresh fruit and vegetables

- all fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables.

### Plant material

- live plants including cuttings
- tea containing seeds, fruit skin (for example citrus and apple peel) and fruit pieces
- remedies and medicines containing herbs, seeds, bark, fungi and dried plant material
- fresh and dried flower arrangements and potpourri
- dried herbs and leaves
- handicrafts (including wreaths and Christmas decorations) containing seeds, nuts, corn, pine cones, grapevines, bark, moss, straw or other plant material
- wooden goods.

## Live animals and animal products

- all mammals, birds, birds' eggs and nests, fish, reptiles, amphibians and insects
- feathers, bones, horns, tusks, wool and animal hair
- skins, hides and furs
- stuffed animals and birds (some may be prohibited under endangered species laws)
- shells and coral including jewellery and souvenirs
- beeswax and other bee products
- used animal equipment including veterinary equipment and medicines, shearing or meat trade tools, saddlery and tack and animal or bird cages
- pet food including canned products and rawhide chews
- rawhide articles and handicrafts including drums.

## Other items

- biological specimens including tissue culture
- craft and hobby lines made from animal or plant material
- used sporting and camping equipment including tents, footwear, hiking boots, golf equipment and bicycles
- used freshwater watercraft or fishing equipment including rods and nets, waders, kayaks, paddles and life jackets.

## Biosecurity import conditions

More information is available from the [Biosecurity Import Conditions system \(BICON\)](#).

## Reporting biosecurity risks and breaches

If you find insects, animal or plant material when unpacking your luggage or goods, report this immediately to the department by phoning **1800 798 636**.

You will not be prosecuted if you have unintentionally brought in material of biosecurity concern.

If you suspect that someone has breached Australian biosecurity, export or food inspection laws, you can report this information to the department by:

**Email:** [enforcement@agriculture.gov.au](mailto:enforcement@agriculture.gov.au)

**Phone:** 1800 803 006

### Postal Address:

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources Redline, Enforcement  
GPO Box 858  
Canberra ACT 2601



Phone 1800 900 090



[agriculture.gov.au](http://agriculture.gov.au)

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