

APAL demands Australia prioritise Australian food security.

Australia's peak apple and pear body, APAL, is urging the Australian apple and pear industry and Australian agricultural producers to have their say on proposed arrangements to enable the import of fresh apples from the USA's Pacific Northwest regions into Australia – and with them the risk of introducing at least 24 foreign pests and diseases into Australia.

The arrangements are detailed in the [Draft report for the review of biosecurity import requirements for fresh apple fruit from the Pacific Northwest states of the United States of America](#) released today by the Australian Government, Department Agriculture, Water and Environment.

APAL CEO Phil Turnbull said, "The report identifies 24 exotic mites, midges, maggots, worms, moths, rots, bacterium, fungi and viruses and documents repeated outbreaks in USA growing regions. These pests have the potential to devastate Australian apple production and other valuable agricultural industries, which threatens Australia's national food security and the food security of countries that rely on our safe, clean and high-quality agricultural exports.

"Moreover, there's little upside for Australian consumers and retailers. Reliable supplies of safe, clean, high-quality apples are available year-round from growing regions across Australia, and we already produce most of world's most popular apple varieties – including varieties the USA is likely to want to export," said Mr Turnbull.

"Australia gets one shot at setting the access requirements. The USA has articulated its America-first trade agenda and we need to respond with equivalent strength. Australia has an obligation to ensure stringent processes and risk thresholds to safeguard Australia's food security," said Mr Turnbull.

Today's release of report is the next stage in a process that was triggered by a trade access request from the USA.

"It's essential something of this significance is dealt with in a transparent manner and with the full involvement of the Australian industry. We encourage everyone to make their views known," Mr Turnbull said.

"Once the report is finalised, it's up to the USA to demonstrate how it will meet the requirements to Australia's satisfaction. Assuming this can be done, Australian consumers will ultimately assess their need for apples grown on the other side of the world."

The draft report and further information including how to provide feedback is available from the [Department Agriculture, Water and Environment website](#).

The current feedback period ends 21 January 2021.

Apple and Pear Australia Limited (APAL) is Australia's peak industry body representing Australia's \$600 million apple and pear industry. APAL's international marketing operations promote Australian apple and pear exports around the globe. APAL owns the world's leading fresh produce brand, Pink Lady®, in over 100 countries.