

Biosecurity Act 2015 –Biosecurity (Prohibited and Conditionally Non-prohibited Goods) Determination 2016

Cover Sheet

Please complete and submit this form with your submission:

By email: newbiosecuritylegislation@agriculture.gov.au
Or by post: Biosecurity Legislation Implementation Office
Biosecurity Implementation Branch
Australian Government Department of Agriculture
and Water Resources
GPO Box 858
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WAFarmers Beekeepers Executive welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed implementation of the *Biosecurity (Prohibited and Conditionally Non-prohibited Goods) Determination 2016*.

WAFarmers Beekeepers Section is concerned about the rush to implement the legislation, and the limited information available as to how it would specifically work with existing WA Biosecurity Legislation and Restrictions. The apiary industry in south-western Western Australia is unlike any other, and is free from a number of significant pest and disease threats that are currently prevalent in both the eastern states of Australia, and the remainder of the world. The apiary industry in Western Australia relies heavily on the reputation of quality of the honey and bees, and they will protect it.

While WAFarmers supports moves to update Federal biosecurity legislation to ensure it meets the modern requirements, there is concern that the consequences for Western Australia have not been addressed.

WAFarmers requests clarification on how the proposed *Biosecurity Act 2015* will interact with the existing *Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007*, and the existing Quarantine WA Import Requirements.

WAFarmers requests that existing restrictions on importation of agricultural goods and products into Western Australia remain unchanged until all sectors of affected industries have had an opportunity to assess how the changes to the Federal legislation are honouring state-specific restrictions. The retention of interstate restrictions is welcome, as Western Australia has strict border control.

WAFarmers Beekeepers Executive has had no involvement with the development and potential implementation of the legislation, despite there being a significant risk to the reputation, viability and productivity of the Western Australian apiary industry. The enforcement of the legislation without adequately protecting a unique asset for Western Australia and wider Australian economy is a huge oversight by the State and Federal Governments, and will result in a significant biosecurity threat to Western Australia.

WAFarmers considers that any changes made to biosecurity legislation, whether at a state or federal level should further enhance the Australian reputation for quality and safe agricultural product. Any changes should not increase the risk for adverse biosecurity threats, but should remain unchanged or further decrease any risks.

WAFarmers does not consider the 16 June 2016 deadline to be reasonable, as there is significant misinformation and confusion currently within the Western Australian apiary, grains and horticultural industries. The proposed legislative changes that would remove protections for WA should be amended to ensure industry concerns have been adequately addressed. There is significant work required to ensure the legislation does not cause economic and environmental consequences for the agricultural sector of Western Australia.

WAFarmers does not consider the current level of engagement with affected sectors to be sufficient to support the legislation. WAFarmers requests an extension of time and a hold on the implementation of the *Biosecurity Act 2015* until such a time that all biosecurity threats have been adequately addressed.