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Arriving in Australia— Declare it!

Biosecurity



Australian biosecurity

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

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), along with other jurisdictions, industry and the community, plays a vital role in maintaining 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. Everyone benefits from a strong biosecurity system so everyone has a role to play.

Declare it

You will be given an Incoming Passenger Card before you arrive in Australia. This is a legal document.

You must tick YES on your card to declare if you are carrying food, plant material or animal products. You can take these declared items with you to the clearance point where they will be assessed by a DAFF officer.

Alternatively, you may dispose of food, plant material or animal products on arrival in the quarantine bins located in the airport terminal.

On arrival your baggage may be assessed by x-ray, detector dog or inspected by a DAFF officer. If you fail to declare or dispose of any biosecurity risk items, or make a false declaration:

- you will be caught
- you could be fined \$340 on-the-spot, or
- you could be prosecuted, fined more than \$66 000 and risk 10 years jail and a criminal record.

You will not be penalised if ALL items are declared, even if they are not allowed into Australia.

What happens to items I declare?

In many cases items you declare will be returned to you after inspection. However, any items that present a biosecurity risk will be withheld. Depending on the risk, you can:

- pay for the item to be treated (for example fumigation, gamma irradiation)*
- store the item at the airport for collection upon departure from Australia*
- export the item*, or
- have the item destroyed.

DAFF 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.

Important information for domestic passengers travelling on international flights:

If you're carrying food or other items of biosecurity risk, you must show a DAFF officer a receipt or other document proving that the product is of Australian origin. If you cannot show proof, your items will be seized. Please note that some states prohibit the entry of fresh fruit from other parts of Australia.

On arrival

The following is not a complete list of items that you must declare on arrival. In many cases items you declare will be returned to you after inspection.

Some may be allowed in if accompanied by an Import Permit (issued by DAFF before your arrival) or with treatment in Australia (fees and charges apply). Alternatively you can drop them in quarantine bins at the airport.

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

Dairy and egg products

- infant formula (must be accompanying a child)
- dairy products (fresh and powdered) including milk, cheese and 'non-dairy' creamers
- cheese—must be commercially prepared and packaged and originate from countries free from foot and mouth disease
- all whole, dried and powdered eggs, and egg products, such as mayonnaise
- egg products including noodles and pasta that are not commercially manufactured

Animal 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
- pet food—including canned products and rawhide chews
- rawhide articles and handicrafts including drums

Seeds and nuts

- cereal grains, popping corn, raw nuts, pine cones, birdseed, unidentified seeds, some commercially packaged seeds, and ornaments including seeds

Fresh fruit and vegetables

- all fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables

Plant Material

- 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 or dried flower arrangements and potpourri
- dried herbs or leaves
- handicrafts—including wreaths and Christmas decorations—containing seeds, raw nuts, corn, pine cones, grapevines, bark, moss, straw or other plant material
- wooden items with bark or signs of insects present

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 (taxidermy certificate required—some may be prohibited under endangered species laws)
- shells and coral (including jewellery and souvenirs)
- bee products including honey, beeswax and honeycomb
- used animal equipment including veterinary equipment and medicines, shearing or meat trade tools, saddlery and tack and animal or bird cages

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 (need to be checked to ensure they are clean and free from soil contamination)
- used freshwater watercraft or fishing equipment including rods and nets, waders, kayaks, paddles and life jackets

Reporting biosecurity risks and breaches

Report suspected breaches of Australian biosecurity, export or food inspection laws to the DAFF Redline 1800 803 006. It is a free telephone service that you can use to confidentially report someone you suspect of breaking Australian laws. You can also write confidentially to DAFF's Redline, Investigations and Enforcement Program, GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601 or send an e-mail to compliance@daff.gov.au.

You can also report suspected unwanted pests to 1800 020 504.

*These options are subject to fees and special conditions may apply.

