RISK BACKGROUND

Fresh etrog for ceremonial purposes

Overview

(Image: Wyshak. S (2010) *Citrons Growing*, https://flic.kr/p/8V7Gk7 (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0))

Etrogs (*Citrus medica*) do not require an import permit but must be:

- sourced from Israel or Calabria, Italy
- subject to pre-export treatment and/or inspection by the exporting country
- accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate
- packaged in secure packing (i.e. insect-proof)
- inspected on-arrival.

Importers and department staff should ensure that the BICON conditions are met and that goods are free from biosecurity risks, as well as the key risks described below.

Key risks

Mediterranean fruit fly (*Ceratitis capitata*)

Many fruit fly species such as Mediterranean fruit fly are highly invasive and have a large host range. They have the potential to cause significant economic impact on horticultural industries and are national plant priority pest for Australia. Eggs are laid below the skin of host fruit where larvae feed and develop. Some necrosis may be occur around the puncture site on affected fruit. The biosecurity risks associated with Mediterranean fruit fly are mitigated through pre-export irradiation and/or phytosanitary certification prior to export.

Mal secco (*Phoma tracheiphila*)

Mal secco is caused by a conidial fungus that can be carried by infected citrus plant material. Mal secco affects the vascular system of host plants, resulting in discoloured fruit, chlorosis, wilt and dieback. Australia requires exporting countries to certify that imported etrogs are free from this disease, and the department inspects fruit on-arrival in Australia to confirm freedom from disease symptoms.

Other pathway risks

Imports of fresh etrogs for human consumption may harbour other types of biosecurity risk material such as a range of live insects, disease symptoms, and contaminants such as weed seeds, hitchhiker pests and trash. These risks are managed through the range of import conditions outlined above.