



Importing strawberries from Japan & Korea

Fact sheet

February 2023



There are several steps Australia undertakes before imported goods are cleared for the Australian market. When goods arrive at the Australian border, we will:

- Assess and verify that all documentation associated with the consignment is complete and valid.
- Inspect a proportion of the fresh product for pests and diseases that are of biosecurity concern for Australia.
- Diagnose any pests or diseases that are found on the fruit during inspection to determine if they are of biosecurity concern for Australia.
- Apply management action to the consignment, if the pests and diseases found are of biosecurity concern for Australia.

Assess and verify documents

When we assess and verify documentation we will look at:

- The import permit that was issued to the importer. We will verify that the permit is valid (has not expired). If the strawberries arrive without a valid permit, they will be directed for export or destruction.

A valid permit is one that we have approved and issued to the importer before the goods arrive in Australian territory. Importers should apply for a permit as early as possible and before the goods leave Japan or Korea.

- The phytosanitary certificate that was issued by the exporting National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO). We will verify that the document is complete (has all the information required under the import conditions) and is valid (not a fraudulent copy).

The phytosanitary certificate must be issued by the exporting NPPO on or between 1 December and 31 March.

- Other documentation that may be required under the import conditions. We will verify that the additional documents provided are valid and satisfy the requirements set out under the import conditions.

Should the phytosanitary certificate or any other document be incomplete, the fruit will be held under biosecurity control until we can verify the information with the exporting NPPO.

Once we have assessed and verified that all documentation is complete and valid, the fruit will be directed for inspection.

Biosecurity inspection

The consignment of strawberries will be inspected at a class 2.4 Approved Arrangement facility.

It is the responsibility of the importer (or their broker) to deconsolidate the consignment for inspection. Do not open or remove fruit from the packaging, until instructed by a biosecurity officer.

A representative sample of strawberries will be selected from the consignment for inspection. One unit is equal to one piece of fruit.

For strawberry consignments with:

- More than 1000 pieces of fruit, we will take up to 600 units for inspection.
- 450 – 999 pieces of fruit, we will take 450 units for inspection.
- Less than 450 pieces of fruit, we sample the entire consignment.

The units for inspection will be selected from across 6 cartons. A number of punnets from each of the 6 cartons will be sampled thoroughly, to meet the appropriate sampling rate.

All sampled fruit will be removed from its packaging for inspection.

All sampled fruit will be visually inspected and examined under a microscope to find biosecurity risk material, such as pests and symptoms of disease.

Should any pests or disease symptoms be found, they will be sent to our laboratories for identification (diagnostics). Should fruit show suspect symptoms or signs of internal feeding, they may be cut open.

It is the responsibility of the importer (or their broker) to repack the sampled fruit.

Food safety inspection

All food imported into Australia must comply with Australian food standards and requirements for safety. We monitor imported food to check it meets these requirements through a risk-based inspection scheme called the [Imported Food Inspection Scheme](#) (IFIS).

When a consignment of fresh strawberries is referred to the IFIS, you must present a valid [Food Safety Management Certificate](#). The certificate is evidence that a food has been produced through a food safety management system. This system must have appropriate controls in place to manage identified food safety hazards of concern.

Consignments of fresh strawberries are referred for inspection and testing at a rate of 5%. If a consignment is referred for inspection, samples of fruit will be selected from each consignment for testing.

5 x 100g samples will be taken per lot of food. The number of lots to be sampled from a batch depends on the number of lots in the batch. This is defined by the Imported Food Control Regulations 2019.

A batch means food of a particular kind that is made or packed in a distinct manner.

A lot means a quantity of food of a particular kind prepared or packed under essentially the same conditions within a specific time period, usually within 24 hours.

Samples may be tested for agricultural and veterinary chemical residues, and subject to a visual and label inspection.

To minimise the number of samples taken:

- lodge one consignment per entry – this consignment can comprise strawberries from multiple farms



- use the one packing house as the producer to maintain the testing history
- package/label the strawberries as coming from this one producer
- minimise the number of lots exported within the one consignment.

Note: While the above will minimise the number of samples taken, a fail will mean all farms will be impacted, as the fail will be against the packing house (producer).

If the consignment fails any testing the inspection rate will increase to 100%. This will impact on all future consignments of fresh strawberries from the producer until a history of compliance is established, which is usually after five consecutive passes.

Pest diagnostics

We employ scientific expertise (entomologists, botanists and plant pathologists) to undertake diagnostics of pests and diseases found on imported plants and plant products.

Once the pest or disease symptom has been identified, our scientists will inform our biosecurity officers of the result and what action must be taken, if any, to manage the biosecurity risk.

If the pest or disease symptom has been identified as **not a biosecurity risk** for Australia, the strawberries will be directed for release into the Australia market.

If the pest or disease symptom has been identified as **a biosecurity risk** for Australia, the fruit will be directed for action.

Actions generally undertaken are:

- Treatment (if available)
- Reconditioning or partial destruction to remove contaminants or diseased fruit
- Export out of Australia

- Disposal

Importers can choose which action they would like to accept.

If strawberries are treated or re-conditioned, they may require another inspection to verify the treatment or reconditioning has been effective.

The costs associated with applying the action options are at the importer's expense.

Importer responsibility

Importers (or their brokers) are required to:

Pre-export

- Engage suppliers who have production sites registered for export to Australia.
- Source strawberries from **Japan** where production areas are free from *Drosophila pulchrella*, *D. subpulchrella* and *D. suzukii*.
- Source strawberries from **Korea** where production areas are free from *Drosophila suzukii*.
- Ensure strawberries are managed using the agreed systems approach for *Xanthomonas fragariae* (angular leaf spot).
- Confirm strawberries have been inspected prior to export and are accompanied by a valid phytosanitary certificate.
- Confirm strawberries will be securely packaged and labelled in accordance with Australia's import requirements.

On arrival

To ensure efficient processing when goods arrive at the Australian border, importers (or their brokers) should, before the goods arrive:

- Have a valid import permit.



- Confirm access to a class 2.4 (or 2.41) approved arrangement in Australia for holding, inspecting, and treating the fruit.
- Submit all relevant documentation through our online systems.

The importer (or their broker) must follow all biosecurity directions provided in the online systems.

Importers (or their brokers) must deconsolidate the consignment for inspection. It is important not to open or remove fruit from the packaging, until instructed by a biosecurity officer.

Importers (or their brokers) must also repackage the fruit following inspection.

Useful resources

- Importing fresh produce for commercial purposes —
www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/goods/plant-products/fresh-produce-commercial-imports
- Minimum documentary and import declaration requirements —
www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/arrival/clearance-inspection/documentary-requirements/minimum-document-requirements-policy
- Clearance and inspection of goods —
www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/arrival/clearance-inspection/documentary-requirements/minimum-document-requirements-policy
[Fresh produce grown and prepared for export to Australia \(awe.gov.au\)](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/import/arrival/clearance-inspection/documentary-requirements/minimum-document-requirements-policy)

Contacts

Call: 1800 900 090

Email: imports@aff.gov.au

Frequently asked questions

What is the systems approach to manage angular leaf spot?

The exporting country NPPO has responsibility for implementing a systems approach as described in their work plan to manage angular leaf spot. The systems approach specifies the source of planting material, registration of production sites and packing houses, monitoring, and pre-harvest testing.

What are the associated fees or charges for inspection and treatment?

Our charging schedule is available at www.agriculture.gov.au/about/fees.

In general, an import will incur charges for permit application and assessment, assessment of documents on arrival, inspection of goods, and testing or treatment (if required). Other external costs may also be associated including fees for approved arrangements, storage, etc.

Are food inspections and biosecurity inspections completed together?

They can be if a dual accredited officer has been booked. We will look to allocate dual officers to these bookings, where they are available.

How long are import permits valid for?

Permits to import fresh strawberries are valid for one year from the date they are granted.

While the permit is valid for one year, fresh strawberries can only be imported during the pest free seasonal window of 1 December to 31 March. Importers can import multiple consignments during this period.



This means that strawberries must be certified for export to Australia on a date between 1 December and 31 March.

How is a consignment defined?

A consignment is defined as one or more lots imported by one importer, on one conveyance at one time, and covered by one phytosanitary certificate.

What is a representative sample?

A representative sample means selecting units that are representative of the consignment. For example, if a consignment has multiple lots, with each lot representing a different grower, then the units selected will ensure that fruit from each grower is represented in the sample.

Also, when selecting units for inspection, the inspector will select randomly from across the consignment. This will also include them selecting fruit from the top, bottom, side and middle of the consignment.

What is the difference between a class 2.4AA and a class 2.41 AA?

Class 2.4 and 2.41 approved arrangements are associated with perishable goods, such as fresh produce, nursery stock and cut flowers.

Class 2.41 AAs are used for verifying consignment packaging for airfreight perishables and securing these perishable consignments for transport from the Cargo Terminal Operators (the air cargo terminal) premises to the inspection point (the Class 2.4 AA).

Class 2.4 AAs are used for deconsolidating consignments, and handling, storage, inspection and treatment of fresh fruit and vegetables, cut flowers and nursery stock (excluding tissue cultures) that are subject to biosecurity control.

Are the fruit selected randomly?

The pieces of fruit selected for inspection are selected randomly.

The total number of punnets collected to be sampled will depend on the number of strawberries within each punnet. For example, for a 600 unit sample, if there are 10 units per punnet then 60 punnets will be selected and opened, and the fruit will be sampled and inspected.

Biosecurity officers inspect goods in accordance with our processes. If the biosecurity officer finds anything suspicious during their inspection, they will investigate with dissection and closer magnification, if required. Biosecurity officers may also seek advice from their supervisor on the best course of action.

Is there a remedial treatment option for a soft skinned fruit like a strawberry?

The remedial treatment option recommended will depend on the identified quarantine pest.

Most arthropod pests can be managed using methyl bromide fumigation. However, if the arthropod pest is found to be a national priority pest such as *Drosophila suzukii* (spotted wing drosophila), the consignment may be directed for export or disposal.

If the pest is found to be a pathogen (bacteria or virus), the goods may be directed for partial disposal, full disposal or export. Partial disposal means that the boxes found to contain infected fruit will be disposed. Full disposal means that the whole consignment will be disposed. If the pathogen is found to be Angular leaf spot, the whole consignment will be directed for export or disposal.

