RISK BACKGROUND

Salmon

Overview

(Image: Joshua Smith, JS57550)

Salmon has the potential to introduce a number of exotic diseases to Australia. The consequences of an exotic disease outbreak in Australia would be severe and would impact upon the Australian community, environment and economy.

Commercial consignments of salmon must be imported from an approved country; a permit is required. The conditions require a government certificate from the country of export, common requirements include:

- Sourcing from populations subject to health monitoring.
- Processed under control of an approved and audited competent authority.
- Washed, inspected and graded, removing fish suspected of disease.
- Processed to at least gilled, eviscerated and head off form.
- Not juvenile or sexually mature adults.

Importers and department staff should always refer to BICON for the current conditions and ensure these are met.

Key risks

Some examples of exotic diseases that could be introduced by salmon include:

Infectious salmon anaemia virus	*Aeromonas salmonicida*	*Infectious pancreatic necrosis virus*
Infectious haematopoietic necrosis virus	*Myxobolus cerebralis*	*Renibacterium salmoninarum*
	Yersinia ruckeri	

We use multiple controls that work together to ensure the biosecurity risk associated with imported salmon meet's Australia's Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) which is very low risk but not zero.

Sourcing salmon from populations subject to health monitoring, and which were not slaughtered as an official disease control measure, reduces the risk diseased fish will be exported to Australia.

Excluding juvenile and sexually mature fish ensures groups with a higher disease risk are not exported to Australia.

Processing salmon under control of an approved competent authority, and grading fish to remove any with signs of infectious disease, reduces the chance diseased fish will be exported to Australia.

Requiring salmon to be in consumer ready form, or processed into consumer ready form at an approved facility on-shore, ensures any waste is managed in a way that will not bring it into contact with species susceptible to salmonid diseases.

Removing the head, gills and viscera takes away tissues that may contain high concentrations of infectious agents. These tissues are more likely to be disposed of as waste and end up in contact with susceptible species.

Ensuring fish susceptible to Infectious Salmon Anaemia virus (ISAV) are not sourced from (or near) farms infected/suspected to be infected with ISAV reduces the risk infected fish will be exported to Australia.

Imported salmon, and products containing imported salmon for human consumption, must not be used as bait or fed to animals. This applies even if the product is safe for human consumption. Using salmon as bait or feeding it to animals creates a direct pathway for a disease agent to come into contact with a susceptible species.