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## Australia questions Malaysian pineapple imports



Australia's largest pineapple marketer is urging the government to rethink plans to allow Malaysian pineapples into the country

A major domestic supplier of fresh pineapple to the Australian market is urging Biosecurity Australia not to allow the import of de-crowned pineapples from Malaysia.

Biosecurity Australia released a draft Import Risk Analysis (IRA) in October of last year that recommended Malaysian pineapples be allowed access under a number of strict quarantine conditions. The organisation is currently reviewing submission on the draft IRA.

According to a report in Queensland Country Life, Tropical Pineapples, which represents 25 farms and produces

around 50 per cent of Australia's domestic pineapple crop, believes imported Malaysian pineapples present a significant risk to the industry there.

The company's agronomist Col Scott, who also sits on the industry advisory committee, which worked with Biosecurity Australia on the draft IRA, said Malaysian pineapples could introduce diseases with the potential to destroy the industry there.

The Malaysian pineapple industry was home to a bacterium that caused bacterial heart rot and fruit collapse, neither of which were present in Australia, he told the newspaper.

"We are just asking Biosecurity Australia to restrict the entry for the time being until more research and science has been done into the bacterial disease," Scott said. "There has been very little research done on it and what research has been done has indicated there is no known control."

Australia currently allows pineapple imports from Sri Lanka, the Solomon Islands, the Philippines and Thailand.