

Comments on the importation of Malaysian fruits into Australia

1. Throughout this testimony the figure 2% risk of importing infected fruits into Australia is mentioned. The question of how this figure was derived has not been answered. Is this an arbitrary number to coincide with “low risk”? A 2% risk cannot be a fixed figure when dealing with infections with *Dickeya* sp. because field infections fluctuate with weather conditions. Normal field infection ranges between 5% and 40%. Thus your risk goes up when field infection is higher.
2. Who is to gain by the importation and sales of Malaysian pineapples in Australia? This has not been made clear. Is this importation meant to help Malaysian growers at the expense of Australia growers?
3. Burden of Proof: It seems rather strange that the Australian pineapple growers are burdened with the task of proving it risky to import Malaysian pineapples to compete with their production. It should be reversed with the burden placed on Malaysia to provide evidence through a 3rd party that is not interested or involved in this transaction to determine if their fruits are 100% safe and risk free.
4. Eradication: Throughout the testimony the term eradication is constantly used in reference to when and if the disease enters Australia. Once you have infection, it is forever! There is no hope of eradication. Maybe containment through quarantine measures, but it is not a sure thing. How can you eradicate something when you cannot see the organism?
5. I would think that the Australian government would be more supportive in perpetuating the pineapple industry in Australia than the pineapple industry of Malaysia. What is presented before them is a certain slow and painful death of the industry should *Dickeya* sp. enter Australia. If Malaysian pineapples are allowed to enter Australia it will be a matter of when not if *Dickeya* sp. enters Australia.
6. Money should be spent aiding the pineapple industry in these struggling times. In Hawaii the government support for research and innovations has ended and consequently the industry has shrunk considerably with the closure of 2 plantations. We no longer export fruits actively but rather market locally. Is this what the Australian growers can look forward to?