4th October 2012

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport
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To whom it may concern

As a ginger grower of 12 years standing, I implore the Senators sitting on this Inquiry into the importation of fresh ginger from Fiji, to listen to the scientific arguments that the Australian Ginger Industry Association has put forward to Biosecurity Australia over the past two years.

Government has to understand that Australia is an island nation that has been blessed with the capability of producing commodities that have been basically disease and pest free. Embarking upon a path of importing produce from countries where it has been proven scientifically there are pests and diseases that are far more virulent than any here in Australia, flies in the face of the National Food Plan which encompasses a food security policy as highlighted below.

What the government plans to keep doing:

- *Ensure a competitive economy and stable business environment, including a robust and effective competition law*
- *Support a national innovation system with public investment in science, research and development*
- *Promote study and careers in science, including agricultural and food science*
- *Work with industry and others to meet labour and skills needs*
- *Reduce red tape and pursue better regulation to reduce costs to business*
- ***Maintain Australia's largely pest-and-disease-free biosecurity status***
- *Progress policy initiatives to address climate change and reform drought policy*
- *Invest in public infrastructure and improve national infrastructure planning and regulation*
- *Develop a strategic policy for the regulation of agricultural and veterinary chemical use*

The risk mitigation options outlined in the Provisional Final IRA, do not ensure that Fijian ginger imported into Australia is pest and disease free. With respect, please instruct the department to review the Provisional Final IRA for the importation of fresh ginger from Fiji with appropriate scientific rigor.

Yours sincerely

John Allen