

Member Update

No. 8 of 2020 • 17th April 2020

TOPIC: Grain Trade Disruptions due to Covid-19 – Delays in Certificates reaching destination ports

1. Purpose

- To advise Members of Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) approach to trade disruptions to arising from delays in Government issued Phytosanitary Certificates arriving at destination ports

2. Background

- GTA wrote to the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) highlighting global grain trade concerns regarding trade disruptions due to delays in shipping documents, including Government Phytosanitary Certificates arriving at destination ports leading to delays in shipments, vessel clearance, and processing for payment within banks.
- GTA's letter supported the recent advice of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) for countries "to be as flexible as possible" and encouraged the Australian Government to be open to and promote with other Governments contingency measures as appropriate to avoid any unnecessary delays and trade disruptions.
- GTA's letter was part of a coordinated action with members of the International Grain Trade Coalition (IGTC) also advocating with their respective Governments to optimise global consistency in minimising trade disruptions arising from Covid-19.

3. Notice to Trade

- GTA Members and all grain exporters should note the information advised by DAWE as outlined below:

DAWE appreciates there are many delays occurring due to forces beyond the control of the industry and National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPO). DAWE is writing to several trading partners about the flexibility to facilitate the trade of plant and plant products.

DAWE understand there may be situations where it is not possible for the original paper certificate to arrive in time for import clearance. We are seeking import countries to accept one, or more, of the following alternate options to facilitate timely clearance:

- *Accept scanned copies or paper copies of phytosanitary certificates provided directly by the importer.*
- *Apply for access to the DAWE web view portal to verify Australian export certificates by contacting ecertadministrator@agriculture.gov.au - please note that processing the application may take some time given the current influx of inquiries.*
- *If importing country NPPOs have concerns with the authenticity of the scanned or paper copies, DAWE is able to send a scanned copy of the phytosanitary certificate*

to a nominated NPPO email address. Please direct all such requests to PlantExportsNDH@agriculture.gov.au including "Client Query" in the email subject line.

For information on the DAWE's position for plant or plant products imported to Australia please refer to the information provided on DAWE website <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/import>

The options as provided above are consistent with DAWE approach for goods imported into Australia. DAWE are asking other countries to adopt a similar policy to validate copies presented by importers. It is noted, countries are encouraged to consider these options to reduce trade disruptions, however, they are not obligated to these suggestions and may have alternative arrangements and processes.

Any further questions, contact DAWE through exdocplantprograms@agriculture.gov.au

- ***GTA would like to acknowledge the pragmatic response and work of DAWE on this issue.***
- ***GTA will continue to liaise with DAWE, IGTC and all Members to ensure all parties are aware of actions being undertaken and review and improve processes to expedite the international trade of grain where possible.***

4. Further information

- Additional Covid-19 related information can be found on the GTA [Covid-19 page](#)
- Further information contact GTA at admin@graintrade.org.au

END.