

*From: Neil Delroy
Sent: Wednesday, 28 April 2010 8:19 AM
To: Wright, Eric
Subject: Quarantine charges*

Eric

As discussed in our phone conversation we have been advised without consultation of yet another increase in quarantine charges. In our meetings with the Department approximately 18 -24 month ago we finally agreed to an increase from \$1.80 per square metre per week to \$2.85 which is a very substantial increase. We have now received a letter, without discussion that it will increase to \$3.70 per square metre for high risk material and \$4.90 for low risk.

In June 2007 we were paying \$1.50 and in May 2009 we were paying \$1.80.

To put this in perspective we are now paying equivalent to \$2.548 million dollars per ha per year for low risk and \$1.924 million per ha per annum for low risk material PLUS add on testing costs. The per square metre charge is just the care and maintenance cost! On average high risk material is in quarantine approximately 117 weeks so the cost equates to \$4.5 million per ha PLUS cost of tests.

In June 2007 we paid \$1.50 per m² per week, in May 2009 \$1.80, currently \$2.85 and now with the latest increase \$3.70 per m² per week. This is a 246% increase over 3 years.

We have had NO consultation on this and the regular updates and consultation that were promised by Mark Holland 18 months ago have NEVER happened. This exorbitant cost of bringing new clonal material into the country will result in people bypassing the system and bringing it in illegally and the result will be the introduction of more exotic pests and disease.

Recently we had the Department of Agriculture quote \$270 per sample to get pathology tests for phytophthora (PC) done on avocado root samples. Queensland charge nothing for the first couple of samples then \$130 per sample, Curtin \$100 and DEC \$74 per sample.

The only conclusion I can come to with what I am seeing at the Department is that it is overcharging. If this is cost recovery then the Department has a problem with costs and needs to look at why it has excessive costs. The Department of Agriculture appears to be becoming more dysfunctional every year and rapidly needs a major overhaul. It is fast becoming an irrelevancy to the industries that it is meant to serve.

Regards

Neil Delroy

Director

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