

Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2008

Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Question: TMA 01

Division/Agency: Trade and Market Access

Topic: Chile Free Trade Agreement

Hansard Page: Written

Senator Williams asked:

Chile Free Trade Agreement

1. What preliminary work has been undertaken by the department into disease risks, opportunities and risks to Australian agriculture with the proposed Free Trade Agreement with Chile?
2. What are the disease and quarantine risks with an FTA with Chile, i.e what are the main disease and pest threats to Australian agriculture? (please list)

Answer:

1. The Australia-Chile Free Trade Agreement, as with other FTAs concluded by Australia, does not affect Australia's approach to import risk analyses or quarantine standards. Australia will continue to take a science-based approach to quarantine and biosecurity. Chilean import proposals will be treated the same as requests from any other country. Import risk analyses (IRA) are undertaken by Biosecurity Australia (BA) in response to market access requests from countries seeking to export products to Australia. Priorities for assessment are determined by the Import Market Access Advisory Group and these priorities are taken into account in the establishment of BA's work plan.
2. There are no additional disease and quarantine risks to Australia as a consequence of the FTA with Chile. Products currently imported from Chile are required to comply with Australia's high quarantine standards. In undertaking any import risk analyses BA would scientifically evaluate any associated disease and pest risks.