

Ms Maureen Weeks, Secretary  
Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport Committee  
Room SG. 62, Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Madam,

I wish to strongly protest to the recent revised draft I.R.A on New Zealand apples being allowed entry to our Fireblight Free Island nation of Australia.

Fireblight can be compared with Foot & Mouth disease in sheep, if anybody imported sheep from a known source of Foot & Mouth, our country would be in uproar and the sheep would be prohibited entry. The same applies to Fireblight.

As an apple and pear grower at Cobram in Northern Victoria where we have operated a 200 Hectare orchard since 1910, no other disease would be more devastating to our business than Fireblight.

There are too many avenues in the draft I.R.A for the disease to get into Australia. Handling errors, illegal acts trash and visual inspections are only a few of the areas of exposure.

There is just too much risk to an industry already under severe financial strain from drought, high wages and many other input costs to allow fruit carrying a potentially devastating disease to enter Australia.

Who pays the cost of financial ruin to the industries, towns and associated business should Fireblight get a hold in Australia?

I ask you and the government to seriously reconsider the draft I.R.A allowing New Zealand apples entry to Australia and not allow such a devastating disease any possible hope of entry to Australia and ban for ever entry of fruit from any country with Fireblight.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Pullar  
P.Pullar & Co (Cobram) Pty Ltd