

Change in Victoria's Blueberry Rust Area Freedom Status

Industry Notice: 27 July 2021

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Blueberry Rust (Thekopsora minima) presence has been confirmed across Victoria, resulting in loss of area freedom for the disease. New requirements now apply for plants, fruit and equipment movement to South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

BACKGROUND

Blueberry Rust (BBR) is a significant disease to both the fruit-growing and nursery industries. Victoria previously maintained an area freedom program for the disease. Recent detections of BBR in Gippsland and the Yarra Valley indicate that the disease has broadly established across Victoria. Eradication and/or restoration of area freedom is not considered possible.

KEY CHANGES

Due to the spread of BBR across Victoria, the state's area freedom status does now not meet national biosecurity requirements.

Effective 30 July 2021 the BBR area freedom certificate (affecting host material leaving Victoria) and importation order (affecting host material entering Victoria) will be removed.

From this date, producers consigning BBR host or carrier material to a sensitive interstate market, including South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, must ensure consignments meet the entry conditions set by these markets.

Host material moving into Victoria will no longer be required to meet BBR entry conditions (previously Condition 37).

ENTRY CONDITIONS BY DESTINATION

- **Into Victoria:** entry requirements (Condition 37) for BBR will no longer apply. Other entry conditions may apply. See <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/PQM>
- **Into South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia:** Entry conditions related to BBR apply.

- South Australia – Condition 1
https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/plant_health
- Tasmania – Condition 28
<https://dppwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/plant-biosecurity/plant-biosecurity-manual>
- Western Australia – Condition 57
<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/iaquarantine/>
- **New South Wales, Queensland and Northern Territory:** no entry conditions for BBR hosts apply

HOST MATERIAL

Host material includes fruit, plants, plant products and cut flowers from the following genera:

- *Vaccinium* spp. (Includes blueberry, cranberry).
- *Rhododendron* spp. (Rhododendrons, including azalea)
- *Gaylussacia* spp. (Huckleberry)
- *Tsuga* spp. (Hemlocks, hemlock spruce)
- *Gaultheria* spp. (syn. *Pernettya* spp.) (Snowberry)
- *Hugeria* spp.
- *Leucothoe* spp. (Includes dog-laurel or fetterbush)
- *Lyonia* spp. (Includes male-blueberry and fetterbush)
- *Menziesia* spp.
- *Oxycoccus* spp. (Small cranberry)
- *Pieris* spp. (Andromedas or fetterbush)

Agricultural equipment and used packages or containers, that have been in contact with or have been used in the cultivation, harvesting, handling, packing or processing of any host plant or plant product are required to meet entry conditions.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Blueberry fruit can be consigned to sensitive markets using an arrangement, which includes a treatment. Producers should contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 for their nearest Plant Standards Officer for more information.

Producers wanting to consign organic plants and fruit to South Australia, Tasmania or Western Australia should contact the receiving interstate agency directly to confirm requirements.

For further information on requirements, please contact:

- South Australia
 - Email: pirsa.planthealthmarketaccess@sa.gov.au
 - Phone: (08) 8207 7814
- Tasmania
 - Email: biosecurity.marketaccess@dpiwve.tas.gov.au
 - Phone: 1800 084 881 or (03) 6165 3777
- Western Australia
 - Email: gwa.import@dpiwd.wa.gov.au
 - Phone: (08) 9334 1841

ACCESSIBILITY

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, please telephone Agriculture Victoria on 136 186.
