



Biosecurity Update: Import of RIFA host materials

16 December 2024

Following an interception of Red imported fire ant (RIFA; *Solenopsis invicta*) at Clunes, near Byron Bay in New South Wales (NSW), this is a reminder of the entry conditions in place to protect Victorian industry and community. This Biosecurity Update restates the entry requirements communicated in the Biosecurity Update on 24 January 2024.

RIFA QUARANTINE ZONES AND RESTRICTED MOVEMENT

Victorian movement conditions refer to RIFA quarantine zones and control areas that are in place in Queensland (QLD) and New South Wales (NSW).

RIFA interstate plant quarantine zone in Queensland

QLD fire ant biosecurity zones cover 5 km from any known detection and are shown in the Interstate Plant Quarantine (IPQ) zone map covering large areas of south-east QLD. These zones are areas that have restrictions on the movement of host material.

To find out more, please refer to <https://www.publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/interstate-plant-quarantine-zone-map/resource/5576f7c5-7abb-4c96-b3d0-346daeab324f>.

RIFA Restricted Movement Control Area in New South Wales

Following detections in NSW, control areas are in place in South Murwillumbah and Wardell, restricting movement of host material from within 5 km of detections. Some zones from QLD detections also extend into NSW.

To find out more, please refer to dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/insect-pests/fire-ants.

INFORMATION ON RIFA

RIFA are reddish-brown with a dark brown abdomen at the rear, small in size (2 to 6mm long), can range in size within one nest, nest in soil and are incredibly aggressive when disturbed.

To find out more, please refer to <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-insects-and-mites/priority-pest-insects-and-mites/fire-ants#h2-6>.

VICTORIAN ENTRY CONDITIONS FOR RIFA

RIFA host material originating from quarantine/control zones in QLD and NSW may only enter Victoria if the following conditions are met.

For interstate exporters

RIFA host material from the quarantine zones is prohibited entry into Victoria unless the consignment:

- Is sent from a property that has:
 - been regularly inspected and found to be free of fire ants; or
 - applied approved control methods to prevent the establishment or spread of fire ants.

AND

- Is accompanied by one of the following certificates to certify or declare that the material has been treated in a manner that meets Victoria's importation requirements for RIFA:
 - a Plant Health Certificate (PHC) stating compliance with the relevant treatment requirements under Condition 36 of the Victorian Plant Quarantine Manual; or
 - a Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC) stating "meets ICA-39" and including the treatment; or
 - a Biosecure HACCP Biosecurity Certificate (BHBC) stating compliance with ECCPRIFA28 and including the treatment; or
 - a BHBC stating compliance with ECCPRIFA21.

AND

- A copy of the certification is forwarded to market.access@agriculture.vic.gov.au prior to dispatch.

For Victorian importers

All businesses receiving consignments of RIFA host material from the quarantine/control zones must:

- Arrange for an Agriculture Victoria Biosecurity Officer to verify the consignment on arrival (fees apply) via 1800 878 962, or email the Region relevant for service delivery:
 - Southeast Region: plant.standards@agriculture.vic.gov.au
 - Southwest Region: plant.southwest@agriculture.vic.gov.au
 - Northern Region: plant.quarantine@agriculture.vic.gov.au

OR

- Be accredited under a compliance agreement CA-17 and ensure each consignment is accompanied by a:
 - PHAC stating "meets ICA-39" and including the treatment; or
 - PHC stating compliance with the relevant treatment requirements under Condition 36 of the Victorian Plant Quarantine Manual; or
 - BHBC stating ECCPRIFA28 and including the treatment; or
 - BHBC stating ECCPRIFA21.

If these requirements have not been met, please contact your local Agriculture Victoria Biosecurity Officer for guidance.

Further information

For further information on this Biosecurity Update please email market.access@agriculture.vic.gov.au.