

WHAT IS INTERSTATE CERTIFICATION ASSURANCE (ICA)?

Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) is a system of plant health certification based on quality management principles.

ICA provides an alternative to traditional plant health certification involving Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development (DBIRD) inspectors. Traditionally inspectors supervised treatments and/or inspected produce and issued plant health certificates for the movement of produce intrastate or interstate.

Under ICA a business can be accredited to issue Plant Health Assurance Certificates for its produce. To be accredited a business must be able to demonstrate it has effective in-house procedures in place that ensure produce consigned to intra or interstate markets meets specified quarantine Requirements.

HOW DOES ICA WORK?

ICA is based on documents, Operational Procedures developed by DBIRD in conjunction with industry and interstate quarantine authorities.

Operational Procedures describe the management system, process controls that must be implemented and maintained by a business to become accredited to certify a specific quarantine requirement has been met.

Each Operational Procedure details –

- the scope of the procedure (including the pests, products and locations covered);
- the quarantine requirements to be met;
- the responsibilities and duties of staff involved in managing or implementing the ICA system;
- the principles of operation, design features and standards applying to treatment or inspection equipment;
- the processes and process controls that must be implemented;
- the records and documentation that must be maintained by the accredited business; and
- the completion and issuance of assurance certificates.

Operational Procedures have been developed for a range of treatment and condition requirements including –

- dipping;
- flood spraying;
- low volume non-recirculated spraying;
- fumigation;
- heat treatment (vapour heat and hot water);
- cold treatment;
- hard green / mature green / unbroken skin condition;
- pre-harvest treatment and inspection;
- splitting and reconsigning certified produce.

Further Operational Procedures will be developed as the need arises.

WHAT IS AN ICA ARRANGEMENT?

An ICA arrangement is an agreement between a business and DBIRD. An ICA arrangement covers one business operating under one Operational Procedure at one facility (location).

Under an ICA arrangement the accredited business assumes responsibility for specified treatments and/or inspections previously undertaken by DBIRD inspectors. The DBIRD ensures that the ICA arrangement is in place and working effectively through a program of regular audits.

Once accredited, a business is able to issue documents known as Plant Health Assurance Certificates that are accepted by DBIRD and the plant quarantine authorities of other States as evidence of conformance to the specified quarantine requirements covered by the certificate.

WHAT IS THE ICA SCHEME?

The ICA Scheme is a national scheme of plant health certification that is accepted by all States and the Northern Territory.

The national ICA Scheme provides a harmonised approach to the audit and accreditation of businesses throughout Australia and the mutual recognition of Plant Health Assurance Certificates accompanying Consignments of produce moving intra or interstate.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ICA?

The actual benefits obtained by individual businesses in adopting ICA may vary according to the type of operation and the produce covered by the ICA arrangement.

However benefits are likely to include –

- increased flexibility of operations (businesses can plan and schedule operations without the need to arrange for a DBIRD inspector to be present);
- improved awareness of quality issues (documented staff responsibilities and duties);
- improved operational control (procedures well documented);
- improved staff participation through structured and documented training;
- reduced certification costs.

HOW DO I BECOME ACCREDITED

A business seeking to become accredited for an ICA arrangement must complete and lodge an application for accreditation on the prescribed form. Completed applications should be forwarded to the Plant Health Certification Assurance Supervisor in the region in which the ICA arrangement is intended to operate. A list of contact addresses is shown overleaf.

Application must be made by the individual, partnership, incorporated company, cooperative association or other legal entity that owns and operates the business to be covered by the ICA arrangements. A separate application is required for each ICA arrangement being sought.

The ICA arrangement must be audited before the business can be accredited. Audits are a systematic examination of the business, its staff, equipment and facilities to verify conformance with the requirements of the Operational Procedure covering the ICA arrangement.

Regular scheduled audits will be carried out on an ongoing basis. The number and frequency of audits will be depend on issues such as the period of operation of the facility and the Operational Procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The ICA Scheme has officers located in all major horticultural production areas throughout the Territory.

Further information on the ICA Scheme, application forms and copies of Operational Procedures are available from the following locations –

DARWIN

Plant Health Certification Assurance Supervisor
Interstate Quarantine
Department of Business, Industry and Resource
Development
GPO Box 3000

DARWIN NT 0801

Telephone: (08) 8999 2138
Facsimile: (08) 8999 2111

KATHERINE

Interstate Quarantine Inspector
Interstate Quarantine
Department of Business, Industry and Resource
Development
PO Box 1346

KATHERINE NT 0851

Telephone: (08) 8973 9704
Facsimile: (08) 8973 9777

ALICE SPRINGS

Interstate Quarantine Inspector
Interstate Quarantine
Department of Business, Industry and Resource
Development
PO Box 8760

ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871

Telephone: (08) 8951 8166
Facsimile: (08) 8951 8112

CURRENT ICA ARRANGEMENTS

There are many ICA arrangements utilised throughout Australia. Frequently used arrangements in the NT are:

ICA 01 – Dipping with Dimethoate or Fenthion

ICA 02 – Flood Spraying with Dimethoate or Fenthion

ICA 03 – Low Volume Non-Recirculated Spraying with
Fenthion

ICA 06 – Certification of Hard Green Condition of Bananas

ICA 13 – Unbroken Skin Condition of Approved Fruits

ICA 15 – Mature Green Condition of Tahitian Limes and
Black Sapotes

ICA 16 – Certification of Mature Green Condition Bananas

ICA 19 – Treatment and Inspection of Mangoes

The Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) Scheme



Northern Territory Government
Department of Business, Industry & Resource Development


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