

19 December 2018

Mr Daryl Quinlivan
Secretary
Department of Agriculture and Water Resources
Via email:

cc: Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

Dear Mr Quinlivan,

Re: Grain import policies, protocols and permits

GrainGrowers is a representative organisation with 17,000 members across all states of Australia.

Grain production is an integral component of Australian agriculture and regional Australia. Generating \$14.6 billion in annual production value and \$12.2 billion in export earnings, the grains sector makes a significant and direct contribution to our national economy, while also underpinning a range of other agricultural and food industries in Australia and overseas.

The Australian grain industry understands the importance of trade.

GrainGrowers does not oppose the importation of grains or processed grain products, as long as biosecurity is not compromised. Whole and processed grains imports pose a high biosecurity risk. As you are aware, whole and processed grain imports provide a direct pathway for the introduction and spread of exotic pests and diseases that can harm humans, animals, crops and the environment. Specific risks are dependent on the presence of pests and diseases in the specific country of origin, but can include karnal bunt (*Tilletia indica*), khapra beetle (*Trogoderma granarium*), weed seeds, foot and mouth disease, Newcastle disease and infectious bursal disease.

Australia's long-standing grain import permit and protocol system, as administered by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources ("the Department"), is designed to allow imports to occur without compromising Australia's biosecurity.

GrainGrowers therefore supports the importation of grains or processed grain products under strict compliance with all aspects of the grain import protocol. GrainGrowers does not believe that any aspect, clause or condition of the protocol should be subject to redefinition or reinterpretation. It is the role of the Department, not grower organisations or any other organisation, to assess all import permit applications for grains and make a determination in accordance with the protocol.

If it is deemed, via rigorous scientific assessments, that any or all aspects of the current protocol are not appropriate or fit for purpose in terms of managing biosecurity risks (i.e. either too stringent or too loose), then GrainGrowers recommends a full and thorough review of the protocol by suitably qualified experts, accompanied by a thorough stakeholder consultation, must occur.

For further information please contact GrainGrowers CEO, Mr David McKeon at david.mckeon@graingrowers.com.au or 02 9286 2000.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brett Hosking', written in a cursive style.

Brett Hosking
Chair, GrainGrowers

