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NEW PROTECTION FOR SA'S FRESH PRODUCE INDUSTRIES

South Australia's \$1.5 billion fresh produce industries will now have greater protection, thanks to new statewide laws coming into effect from this week.

The *Plant Health Act 2009* tightens import rules for plant and plant-related products and boosts the State's plant biosecurity measures.

On-the-spot fines will now apply for the travelling public carrying unauthorised fruit into the Riverland, and increased penalties will apply where uncertified fruit and vegetables are brought into South Australia.

Agriculture Minister Paul Caica says the new legislation ensures this State's fresh fruit and vegetable industry will be further protected from the potentially costly impact of pests and diseases.

"A key example of this is South Australia's achievement in remaining the only mainland State to be fruit fly free, despite significant fruit fly activity in the eastern states," he said.

"This not only saves the State the considerable expense involved with eradicating outbreaks, it provides SA and our 'fruit bowl' in the Riverland with a definitive market advantage."

The new Act provides for upgraded levels of protection of plants from pests within SA; the regulation of the movement of plants into, within, and out of the state; and the control, destruction and suppression of pests.

New requirements include:

- The registration of all importers of plant and plant-related material into SA;
- Transport manifests must be provided prior to entry of plant and plant related material; and
- New import verification procedures and increased penalties for non-compliance.

The State Government agency, Primary Industries and Resources SA, has been working with key horticulture industry groups, the State's produce importers and exporters, transport companies and others to help explain the changes and to assist implementation.

The Plant Health Act 2009 repeals existing legislation – the Fruit and Plant Protection Act 1992 and the Noxious Insects Act 1934.

Details of the new Act can be found at: www.pir.sa.gov.au/planthealth/legislation