

WHAT IS INTERSTATE CERTIFICATION ASSURANCE (ICA)?

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

ICA provides an alternative to traditional plant health certification that involved PIRSA inspectors supervising treatments and/or inspecting produce and issuing Plant Health Certificates for the interstate movement of produce.

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

WHAT IS THE ICA SCHEME?

The ICA Scheme is a national plant health certification scheme accepted by all States and Northern Territory. The ICA scheme provides a harmonised national approach to the audit and accreditation of businesses in Australia and the mutual recognition of Plant Health Assurance Certificates accompanying consignments of produce moving 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 they are likely to include –

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

HOW DOES ICA WORK?

ICA is based on documented Operational Procedures developed by Biosecurity SA-Plant Health in conjunction with industry and interstate quarantine authorities.

Operational Procedures describe the management system, processes and 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 –

- scope of the procedure (including the pests, products and locations covered);
- quarantine requirement to be met;
- responsibilities and duties of staff involved in managing or implementing the ICA system;
- principles of operation, design features and standards applying to the treatment or inspection equipment;
- process and process controls that must be implemented;
- records and documentation that must be maintained by the accredited business; and
- completion of nationally accepted Plant Health Assurance Certificates (PHAC's).

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

- area freedom to various pests
- 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

Other Operational Procedures exist and new ones are developed as the need arises.

WHAT IS AN ICA ARRANGEMENT?

An ICA arrangement is an agreement between a business and PIRSA. 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 Biosecurity SA - Inspectors.

PIRSA 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 plant quarantine authorities of other states and the Northern Territory as evidence of conformance to the specified quarantine requirements covered by the certificate.

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;

ICA, Biosecurity SA - Plant Health,
33 Flemington St, Glenside, S.A. 5065.

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 arrangement. A separate application is required for each ICA arrangement being sought.

An 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 depend on issues such as the period of operation of the facility and the Operational Procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on the ICA Scheme, application forms and copies of the Operational Procedures are available on the Biosecurity SA - Plant Health, Plant Health Operations ICA Web Site;

www.pir.sa.gov.au/ica

or the national DQMAWG website

<http://domesticquarantine.org.au/>

under ICA Database

Or from;

ICA Enquiries

PIRSA Biosecurity SA - Plant Health
Plant Health Operations
33 Flemington Street, GLENSIDE SA, 5065

Email

PIRSAPlanthealthMarketAccess@sa.gov.au

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Government of South Australia

Biosecurity SA

The Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) Scheme

