

Notice Oct 2010

Australian Fumigation Accreditation Scheme (AFAS)

As you may recall MAFBNZ has been seeking input from you, as stakeholders (importers, exporters and treatment suppliers) to assess the impact of adopting AFAS as a preborder, border and export fumigation system.

After reviewing the system requirements and feedback from various stakeholders the decision has been made by MAFBNZ to work through the process of implementing AFAS.

The current AFAS methodology is similar to MAFBNZ's, however there are differences (for example tarping to ensure gas tightness). As such, equivalency arrangements (to recognise MAFBNZ's process as the same) need to be in place before AFAS is formally implemented and becomes operational. This has been discussed with the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service who currently lead the scheme.

It should be noted that agreement to equivalencies between Australia and New Zealand is essential before New Zealand becomes a full AFAS member- we also need to ensure we continue to align with MAF's strategic direction.

The process will:

- agree equivalencies with AQIS;
- work through the process of implementation through engagement with all relevant stakeholders
- ensure benefits are maximised and costs minimised.

MAFBNZ will keep stakeholders informed on progress toward the final agreement and will consult with stakeholders regarding the implementation of AFAS when the time is appropriate. To keep up to date visit <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/regs/trans/treat>. or contact Jo-Anne.Stokes@maf.govt.nz.

What will adopting AFAS mean for importers?

Those importing product from AFAS member countries are advised to use treatment suppliers certified under the AFAS scheme. An AFAS registered treatment supplier rated as 'acceptable' would provide treatment equivalent to a New Zealand treatment. Goods arriving in New Zealand would be subject to an audit system rather than mandatory inspection and/or treatment.

The Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) website updates the status and location of offshore treatment suppliers regularly on <http://www.daff.gov.au/aqis/import/general-info/pre-border/afas/providers>.