

## Area or Property Freedom

ICA-23  
Version 5.0

**REVISION REGISTER**

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## 1. Purpose

This procedure describes the intrastate or interstate movement of produce certified under an Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA) arrangement for freedom in an area or property from a pest or disease, based on monitoring by the DPI for the pest or disease.

## 2. Scope

This procedure covers all certification of produce as being free of specified pest or disease based on monitoring by the DPI.

Certification of area or property freedom under this procedure may not fulfil all quarantine entry conditions for all produce to all intrastate and interstate markets.

It is the responsibility of the business consigning the produce to ensure compliance with all applicable quarantine requirements.

Information on intrastate and interstate quarantine requirements can be obtained from a local Plant Standards Officer.

## 3. References

PSW-02 Completion of Plant Health Assurance Certificates

## 4. Definitions

<b>Accredit</b>	means to accredit persons to issue Assurance Certificates under the Plant Health and Plant Products Act 1995
<b>Accredited Source Property</b>	means a property with current area/property freedom approval granted by an Authorised Inspector.
<b>Area/Property Freedom Quarantine Requirement</b>	means a quarantine requirement applying to intra or interstate movement that requires produce to be sourced from properties that are in an area free, or a specified distance from a known outbreak, of a specified pest or disease, or sourced from properties that are inspected and found free from a specified pest or disease.
<b>Authorised Inspector</b>	means a person authorised as an inspector under the Act.
<b>Authorised Signatory</b>	means a person whose name and signature is provided as an authorised signatory on the application for accreditation.
<b>Business</b>	means the legal entity responsible for the operation of the facility and ICA arrangement detailed in the business' application for accreditation.
<b>Certification Assurance</b>	means an arrangement between the DPI and a business that demonstrates effective in-house quality management and provides assurance through documented procedures and records that produce meets specified requirements.

<b>Certified/certification</b>	means a Plant Health Certificate issued by a department of Agriculture of another state or territory or a Plant Health Assurance Certificate issued by an accredited business.
<b>Consignment</b>	means a discrete quantity of packages consigned to one business at one location at one time.
<b>Interstate Certification Assurance (ICA)</b>	means a system of Certification Assurance developed to meet the requirements of State and Territory governments for certification of produce for interstate and intrastate quarantine purposes.
<b>Non-conformance</b>	means a nonfulfilment of a specified requirement.
<b>Package</b>	means the final outer covering in which produce is consigned and may include a box, carton, bin, bundle or other packaging unit.
<b>Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PHAC)</b>	means certification issued by an Authorised Signatory of an accredited business.
<b>Source Property</b>	means a property on which produce is grown, packed or stored, for supply to an accredited business, to be certified under this arrangement.

## 5. Responsibility

*The position titles used reflect the responsibilities of staff under the ICA arrangement. These positions may not be present in all businesses, or different titles may be used for staff who carry out these responsibilities. One person may carry out the responsibilities of more than one position.*

The **Certification Controller** is responsible for:

- representing the business during audits and other matters relevant to ICA accreditation;
- ensuring the business has current accreditation ([7](#));
- training staff in their duties and responsibilities under this procedure;
- ensuring the business and its staff comply with their responsibilities and duties;
- ensuring all source properties have current area/property freedom approval ([6.3](#)); and
- ensuring all certification of produce is carried out in accordance with this procedure.

The **Product Controller** is responsible for ensuring:

- produce received for packing and certification is from approved source properties ([6.3](#));
- area/property freedom certification records are maintained ([6.3.1](#)); and
- produce intended for certification under the ICA arrangement is identified and segregated from produce from non-accredited properties and the identity of the produce and the approved source property is maintained from receipt to dispatch ([6.3.3](#)).

The **Authorised Dispatcher** is responsible for ensuring:

- all packages of certified produce are identified ([6.4.1](#));
- certified produce is stored and transported in secure conditions ([6.4.4](#)); and
- copies of all PHACs issued by the business are maintained ([6.4.2](#)).

**Authorised Signatories** are responsible for:

- verifying all produce in a consignment has been sourced from properties with current approval for area/property freedom quarantine requirement being certified (refer [6.3](#)); and
- ensuring, prior to signing and issuing a PHAC, that produce covered by the certificate has been prepared in accordance with this procedure, and the details on the certificate are true and correct in every particular (refer [6.4.2](#)).

## 6. Procedure

### 6.1. Source Properties

The accredited business must ensure that all source properties are approved for the area/property freedom at least 10 working days prior to the date of sourcing produce.

#### 6.1.1. Approval

The business that owns or manages the source property must complete an application for area/property freedom form (Attachment 2) and submit to DPI for approval (refer PSW-034).

Approval may require a visit by an Authorised Inspector to verify the property's location and compliance with the area/property freedom requirements nominated in the application.

The Authorised Inspector shall endorse the application for area/property freedom following confirmation of conformance with applicable area/property freedom requirements.

Each source property shall be allocated a unique number IP number and granted approval for 12 months or until approval is suspended or cancelled.

### 6.2. Moving Produce Between Source Properties

Produce that is moved between source properties, through an area or another property that is not free of the specified pest for which area/property freedom has been granted, shall be transported under secure conditions which prevents infestation by that pest (refer [6.4.4](#)).

### 6.3. Sourcing Produce

The Product Controller shall ensure that:

- all produce received for certification is from a source property with current area/property freedom approval for the quarantine requirement to be certified;
- copies of each source businesses property freedom certification certificate are obtained prior to sourcing produce for certification. The current status of the property must be checked by referring to the period of approval and the quarantine requirement/s covered.

#### 6.3.1. Receipt of Produce from Another Accredited Business

A business that certifies produce sourced from a business that holds separate accreditation shall ensure:

- each delivery of produce is supplied from a source property with current Area/Property Freedom approval (Attachment 2);
- a Record of Receipt is maintained for all receipts of produce (Attachment 3);
- where applicable, the produce has been transported under secure conditions.

### 6.3.2. Record of Receipt

The Product Controller shall ensure a record is kept of all receipts of produce to be certified for area/property freedom certification using a Record of Receipt (Attachment 3) or records which record the same information.

### 6.3.3. Handling, Identification and Storage

Produce intended for certification under this procedure must be handled and stored in conditions which maintain the identification of the produce and the source property and prevents mixing of conforming and other produce.

## 6.4. Dispatch

### 6.4.1. Labelling

The Authorised Dispatcher shall ensure that, prior to a PHAC being issued, each package of certified produce is marked with indelible and legible characters, of at least 5mm, stating:

- the Interstate Produce (IP) number of the accredited Business certifying the produce;
- the words “Meets ICA-23”; and
- date (or date code) on which the produce was packed;

### 6.4.2. Assurance Certificates

Prior to issuing a PHAC, the Authorised Signatory shall verify that all the produce in the consignment has been sourced from source properties with current approval for the area/property freedom quarantine requirement being certified.

The Authorised Dispatcher shall ensure the completed PHAC is signed by an Authorised Signatory prior to dispatch of the consignment of produce.

Verification shall involve sighting the current endorsed application for Area/Property Freedom covering the source property. The name and signature of the Authorised Signatory issuing the PHAC is evidence that verification of area/property freedom has been conducted.

Assurance Certificates shall be in the form of a Plant Health Assurance Certificate and shall include the following additional certification (Attachment 1):

- the words “Meets the requirements of ICA 23”; or
- the words “Grown in an area free of x”, where x is the nominated pest or disease; or
- the applicable area/property freedom code(s) **or** the specified area/property freedom quarantine requirement(s) for the market to which the produce is consigned.

Individual PHACs shall be issued to cover each consignment (ie. a discrete quantity of produce to a single consignee at the one time) to avoid splitting of consignments (refer PSW-02 - Guidelines for Completion of Plant Health Assurance Certificates). A PHAC may be issued to cover a consignment comprising produce from a number of source properties provided the certification given is applicable to all produce in the consignment.

### 6.4.3. Assurance Certificate Distribution

The **original** (yellow copy) must accompany the consignment.

The **duplicate** (white copy) must be retained by the accredited business.

#### 6.4.4. Post Certification Security

##### **Fruit Fly**

Certified produce must be transported under secure conditions:

- to prevent cross-infestation by uncertified produce;
- when being transported through outbreak areas or areas not declared free from fruit fly.

Secure conditions include:

- (a) unvented packages;
- (b) vented packages with the vents secured with mesh with a maximum aperture of 1.6 mm;
- (c) fully enclosed under tarpaulins, hessian, shade cloth, mesh or other covering which provides a maximum aperture of 1.6 mm;
- (d) shrink-wrapped and sealed as a palletised unit;
- (e) fully enclosed or screened buildings, coldrooms, vehicles or other facilities free from gaps or other entry points greater than 1.6 mm.

Where full containers of fruit consigned to Tasmania, the container must be sealed prior to transport, and the seal number included in the Brand Name or Identifying Marks section of the PHAC (Attachment 1).

## **7. Accreditation**

### **7.1. Application for Accreditation**

A business seeking accreditation for this procedure shall apply for accreditation at least 10 working days prior to the intended date of commencement of certification of produce.

### **7.2. Audit Process**

#### **7.2.1. Initial Audit**

Prior to accrediting a Business, an Inspector carries out an initial audit of the Business to verify the ICA system is implemented and capable of operating in accordance with the requirements of the procedure, and the system is effective in ensuring compliance with the specified requirements of the ICA arrangement.

On completion of a successful initial audit, applicants will be granted provisional accreditation and issued with a Certificate of Accreditation (refer [7.3](#)).



### 7.2.2. Compliance Audits

Compliance audits are conducted to verify that the ICA system continues to operate in accordance with the requirements of the procedure. Compliance audits are, wherever practical, conducted when the ICA system is operating. A compliance audit is conducted:

- within four weeks of the initial audit and accreditation or issue of the first PHAC; and
- within twelve weeks of the business being reaccredited; and
- in the case of a business operating for more than six months of a year, between six and nine months after accreditation or reaccreditation.

On completion of a successful initial compliance audit, accreditation is granted to cover the current season, up to a maximum of twelve months.

Unscheduled compliance audits may be conducted at any time to investigate reported or suspected non-conformances.

### 7.2.3. Re-Accreditation

Accredited businesses are required to re-apply for accreditation each year the business seeks to operate under the ICA arrangement. Businesses seeking re-accreditation must lodge a renewal application prior to accreditation lapsing, or if accreditation has lapsed, prior to commencing further certification of produce under the ICA arrangement.

A compliance audit is conducted within twelve weeks of the Business applying for re-accreditation each year.

A compliance audit is conducted between six and nine months after the date of re-accreditation for an ICA arrangement that operates for more than six months of the year.

## 7.3. Certificate of Accreditation

An accredited business will receive a Certificate of Accreditation. The current Certificate of Accreditation must be available on request by an Inspector.

## 7.4. Non-conformances and Sanctions

### 7.4.1. Non-conformances

Audits are regularly undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of ICA requirements. If, in the opinion of the auditor, there is evidence indicating that there has been a failure to meet one or more accreditation requirements, the auditor may raise a Non-conformance Report (NCR). Actions required to address the non-conformance shall be discussed and recorded on the NCR.

If the integrity of the accreditation has been significantly compromised, the non-conformance may provide grounds for the suspension or cancellation of the accreditation, and prosecution.

### 7.4.2. Incident Reports

Incident Reports may be raised by interstate quarantine authorities to report the detection of a non-conformance in produce certified under this ICA arrangement. An investigation into the incident shall be conducted and findings reported back to the originator.

If the integrity of the accreditation has been significantly compromised, the incident may provide grounds for the suspension or cancellation of the accreditation, and prosecution.

### 7.4.3. Suspension and Cancellation

The DPI may suspend or cancel an accreditation when an accredited business is found, for example, to have:

- obtained accreditation through the provision of false or misleading information;
- not paid fees owing to the DPI;
- contravened an accreditation requirement that compromises the integrity of the arrangement; and/or
- not rectified a non-conformance.

Any action taken by the DPI to suspend or cancel an accreditation shall be provided in writing to the Business. This shall also provide guidance on the lodgement of a written appeal requesting that the decision be reviewed.

### 7.4.4. Prosecution

Businesses found to be operating contrary to the Act may be liable for prosecution.

## 8. Records and Document Control

### 8.1. ICA System Records

The business shall maintain the following records:

- (a) copies of all Applications for Area or Property Freedom for source properties (refer [6.3](#));
- (b) the Record of Receipt (refer [6.3.1](#)); and
- (c) the duplicate copy of each PHAC issued by the business (refer [6.3](#)).

ICA system records shall be retained for a period of at least 12 months from completion, or until the next compliance audit of the ICA arrangement, whichever is the later.

### 8.2. ICA System Documentation

The business shall maintain the following documentation:

- (a) a copy of the Application for Accreditation;
- (b) a current copy of this procedure; and
- (c) a current Certificate of Accreditation.

## 9. Attachments

Attachment 1	Plant Health Assurance Certificate (PSF-003, example)
Attachment 2	Application for Area or Property Freedom (PSF-016)
Attachment 3	Record of Receipt (PSF-053)

## Plant Health Assurance Certificate

### Consignment Details (PLEASE PRINT)

CONSIGNOR	
Name	ABC PTY LTD
Address	<b>STREET ROAD</b> <b>MELBOURNE VIC 3000</b>

CONSIGNEE	
Name	PRODUCE PEOPLE
Address	<b>SOMEWHERE ROAD</b> <b>ADELAIDE SA</b>

RECONSIGNED TO (Splitting consignments or reassigning whole consignments).	
Name	
Address	

BRAND NAME OR IDENTIFYING MARKS (as marked on packages)	DATE OR DATE CODE (as marked on packages)
<b>ABC PRODUCE</b>	<b>05/05/2009</b>

Number of Packages	Type of Packages (e.g. trays, cartons)	Type of Produce	Authorisation for Split Consignment
20	Trays	Apples	

### Treatment Details

Treatment Date	Treatment	Chemical (Active Ingredient)	Concentration / Duration and Temperature

Additional Certification / Codes
<b>QFF01, MFF01</b>

### Declaration

I, an Authorised Signatory of the accredited business that prepared the plants or plant produce described above, hereby declare that the plants or plant produce have been prepared in the business's approved facility in accordance with the business's Certification Assurance arrangement and that the details shown above are true and correct in every particular. I acknowledge that it is an offence under the Plant Health and Plant Products Act 1995 to issue assurance certificates without being accredited and/ or making false statements in certificates and declarations.

<b>A. Signature</b>	<b><i>ASIGN</i></b>	<b>05/09/2009</b>
AUTHORISED SIGNATORY'S NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE

### Certification Details (PLEASE PRINT)

IP NUMBER	FACILITY NUMBER	PROCEDURE
V9999	01	ICA- 23

ACCREDITED BUSINESS THAT PREPARED THE PRODUCE	
Name	ABC PTY LTD
Address	<b>STREET ROAD, MELBOURNE VIC 3000</b>

GROWER OR PACKER	
Name	ABC PTY LTD
Address	<b>STREET ROAD, MELBOURNE VIC 3000</b>

OTHER FACILITIES SUPPLYING PRODUCE	
Name	
Address	

# APPLICATION FOR SOURCE PROPERTY AREA OR PROPERTY FREEDOM

See PSW-34: Source Property Approvals for a guide to completing the application form

## PROPERTY DETAILS (A separate application must be completed for each source property)

Trading Name of Business	
Name of property owner/manager:	Telephone: Facsimile:
Email Address	
Postal Address	
Source Property Street Address <small>* Please attach map showing property location &amp; area(s) where produce is grown on the property</small>	
Real Property Description <small>* Available from Rates Notice or Local Government Authority</small>	
Produce Type/s to be certified <small>NOT stonefruit or citrus - must be specific type eg apple, orange, lemon, tomato, plum, peach, fruiting grapefruit tree, etc - If insufficient space attach a list</small>	

### DECLARATION

I declare that the property details above are true and correct.		
..... Name of owner/manager	..... Signature of owner/manager	...../...../..... Date

### FOR DPI APPROVAL ONLY

Period of Approval	...../...../..... to ...../...../.....		
Interstate Produce (IP) number	V _____	Property Number	
Area/Property freedom code/s	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	5. _____	6. _____
Property GPS Location (Decimal Degrees)	S (-) _____	E _____	

### CONFIRMATION OF AREA OR PROPERTY PEST FREE STATUS

Property Code	Definition	Authorisation Y or N
MFF01	Grown on a property more than 15km from an outbreak of Mediterranean Fruit Fly (MFF)	
MFF02	Grown on a property more than 80km from a known outbreak of Mediterranean Fruit fly	
PHY02	Grown on a property within a Phylloxera Exclusion Zone (PEZ), which is being managed in accordance with the National Phylloxera Management Protocol	
PHY03	Grown on a property more than 40km from a known occurrence of Phylloxera (Tas)	
PHY04	Grown on a property where Phylloxera is not known to exist and more than 50m from a grapevine (NT)	
PHY06	Grown on a property within a Phylloxera Risk Zone (PRZ), which has been surveyed and found to be free of Phylloxera in accordance with the National Phylloxera Management Protocol	
QFF01	Grown on a property more than 15km from a known outbreak of Queensland Fruit Fly	
QFF02	Grown on a property more than 80km from a known outbreak of Queensland Fruit Fly	

### APPROVAL

..... PSO Name	..... Signature of PSO	...../...../..... Date
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