

## **Comments from the Victorian Departments of Primary Industries and Health**

### **Due date of submission – 7 November 2012**

The Victorian Departments of Primary Industries (DPI) and Health (DH) welcome the opportunity to provide comments on Application A1069 which seeks approval to irradiate tomatoes and capsicums as a phytosanitary measure (particularly against fruit fly).

DPI and DH recognise that the principal plant quarantine insecticides in Australia used for the disinfestation of fresh fruit and vegetables have been dimethoate and fenthion. DPI and DH are mindful that the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has suspended the post-harvest use of dimethoate on a number of fresh fruit and vegetables, including fresh tomatoes and capsicums. DPI and DH are also mindful of the possibility that the APVMA will suspend the use of fenthion in certain horticultural situations, including post-harvest use on tomatoes and capsicums.

Post-harvest dimethoate and fenthion dips and sprays have been the major operational procedures used by Queensland growers to access the Victorian market.

DPI and DH recognise that biosecurity measures are vital in protecting our plants from pests and disease and allow for increased interstate and international trade. Free trade is important driver of productivity growth and provides a variety of product choices for the consumer. To that end, phytosanitary treatments that are safe and effective in an environment where the range of options is decreasing is important.

DPI and DH accept FSANZ's assessment of the safety of irradiation, its effect on the nutrient composition of tomato and capsicum, and the limits proposed. On the basis of that assessment, DPI and DH support the application by Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation for approval to irradiate tomatoes and capsicums as a phytosanitary measure in an environment where fruit fly disinfestation options are decreasing.