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Good afternoon

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment supports the development of primary production and processing requirements for high-risk horticulture.

Enhancements in domestic food safety regulation supports Australia's reputation as a supplier of safe food to Australia's export markets. The improved confidence in Australia's horticulture food safety will benefit the industry in regaining and maintaining market share in the event of an incident or recall.

The development of primary production and processing requirements for high-risk horticulture will facilitate better consistency between Australia's domestic production of high-risk horticulture with the regulation of at-border measures for imports of horticultural produce. As part of its risk management measures, the department can mandate food safety management certificates for imported food. Such certificates can be required where evidence is needed that a food has been produced through a food safety management system to control identified hazards of concern. From 9 November 2022, the department will be requiring minimally processed ready-to-eat berries and pomegranate arils to be imported with a valid food safety management certificate and is likely to expand the scope of this requirement to other high risk horticultural produce. This requirement can be met by importers obtaining certification from an accredited third party certification body that demonstrates that a food producer operates a food safety management system consistent with internationally agreed food safety principles as set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The department also supports a broadening of the scope of other commodities required to meet primary production and processing requirements in the Code, to include those that have been associated with foodborne illness including dates, semi-dried fruit, nuts, fresh herbs and fresh coconut.

Kind regards

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The department acknowledges the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to traditional custodians, their cultures and elders past and present.

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