

Importing seeds into Tasmania

Please note: This fact sheet relates only to seeds for sowing. If you are thinking about importing grain or seed for use as animal feed, this fact sheet does not apply and you should check Import Requirement 30 in the Plant Quarantine Manual Tasmania (www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/plantimports).

There are many pests and diseases on the mainland that we don't have in Tasmania – and we intend to keep it that way. As an island state, Tasmania has always had a biosecurity advantage over the rest of the country, which in practice means lower pest, disease and weed pressures on our lifestyle, our environment and our primary industries. We are capitalising on this advantage by having a rigorous and specifically Tasmanian biosecurity system that identifies and minimises the risk of a pest, disease or weed coming across Bass Strait.

Anyone who wants to bring plant seeds into Tasmania needs to be aware that there are requirements that they will need to comply with. This fact sheet is an overview of those requirements and what you need to do to be able to import seeds into Tasmania.

If you are planning to import seed from overseas (including via EBay), you will need to comply with national biosecurity laws, as well as Tasmania's.

What are the Import Requirements for seeds?

The conditions under which seed may be imported to Tasmania are spelt out in Import Requirement 36 – Seed for Sowing (IR 36), in the Plant Quarantine Manual (www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/plantimports).

IR 36 specifies the general requirements that apply to importation of all types of seed. It also reminds importers that in the case of certain seed types, additional Import Requirements apply. These Import Requirements are also in the Plant Quarantine Manual. The requirements in IR36 are summarised below.

NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO IMPORT

It is important for all importers to advise Biosecurity Tasmania of their plans to import, before the seed arrives in Tasmania. This gives Biosecurity Tasmania the chance to check that the seed is

permitted, and get in touch with the importer if there appear to be any problems or questions. To notify, an importer must submit a completed "Notice of Intention to Import Seed for Sowing" form to Biosecurity Tasmania (contact details below) at least 24 hours before the import arrives in Tasmania.

PACKAGE IN GOOD ORDER The packaging must be undamaged, clean and free of any soil, plant material or anything else that might harbour a pest or disease.

LABELLING The packaging must also be clearly labelled with a description of the contents and the names and addresses of the grower, the packer and/or the supplier.

NO GENETICALLY MODIFIED SEED

The importation of genetically modified seed to Tasmania is illegal unless the importer has obtained

prior authorisation under the *Genetically Modified Organisms Control Act 2004*.

PRESENT FOR INSPECTION All imported seed must be presented to Biosecurity Tasmania on arrival. Seed imported through the mail or freight services must be marked for the attention of Biosecurity Tasmania.

NATIONAL IMPORT REQUIREMENTS If seed being imported into Tasmania is sourced from overseas, the importer must comply with national seed import requirements as described on the Import Conditions (ICON) database at www.aqis.gov.au

CERTIFICATES The seed must be accompanied by a statement of seed analysis which shows that no Tasmanian declared weeds seeds were found in a representative sample of the seed. The statement must also indicate that any soil mixed in with the seed did not amount to more than 0.1% of the sample, by weight, and that rye grass nematode galls were not present.

Importing a small quantity of seed

If your consignment of seed is 1 kg or less, you may not need to comply with the requirement for a statement of seed analysis, as outlined above.

You will not need a statement of seed analysis if you are getting your seed from an “approved supplier” – that is, from a supplier that Biosecurity Tasmania is satisfied has quality assurance or other systems in place to minimise the risk of the consignment being contaminated with weed seeds. If you are unsure of a supplier’s status, please contact Biosecurity Tasmania.

Another alternative to the statement of seed analysis is to apply to go onto the Register of Seed Importers. Biosecurity Tasmania will assess your application to determine whether you are likely to be capable of sharing responsibility for the biosecurity of imported seed. Registered importers are expected to examine the seed themselves prior to sowing, and to contact Biosecurity Tasmania in the event they detect contaminants. Registered importers also agree to maintain basic import records that can be provided to Biosecurity Tasmania from time to time.

If you import seed from a source that is not an approved supplier and you are not on the Register of Seed Importers, you will either need to obtain a statement of seed analysis or Biosecurity Tasmania

will inspect the seed and determine whether it needs to be sent to a seed laboratory for examination, at your cost.

Please note that, even if you source a small quantity of seed from an approved supplier, or you are on the Register of Seed Importers, you must still meet all other import requirements in IR 36.

Contacts and References

The Plant Quarantine Manual Tasmania (PQMTas) is the complete guide to Import Requirements for all plants and plant products (including seeds). PQMTas is on our website at www.dpipwe/tas.gov.au/biosecurity

TBIRD is an interactive search engine facility designed to complement the PQMTas. Type in the species of seed you want to import and it will identify any Import requirements that apply. TBIRD is on our website at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity

Further information. If you are unable to find the information you need on our website, please phone Biosecurity Tasmania on (03) 6233 3352 .

The Notice of Intention to Import Seed form (NOI) can be downloaded from our website. You will find it at www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity

You can send your completed NOI form to noi.biosecurity@dpipwe.tas.gov.au or you can fax it.

For seeds arriving via Australia Post, fax the NOI to Biosecurity Tasmania’s Launceston office on (03) 6777 5159. For seeds arriving by air, freight company etc, fax the NOI to the Biosecurity Tasmania office in the relevant region:

South	Ph 6165 3777 Fax 6173 0225
North	Ph 6777 2162 Fax 6777 5159
North West	Ph 6421 7622 Fax 6421 7614