



For immediate release
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Media Release:

If it's not Australian Grown, it makes you wonder how it's grown

Australian shoppers are being urged to think critically about the impact of buying imported goods over Australian grown items, in a new campaign launched by Australian Made, Australian Grown.

The potential health and safety issues consumers face when eating or drinking imported products are highlighted in the latest Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) failed food reports, which found that a number of foreign foods failed to meet Australia's strict standards.

Australian Made, Australian Grown Chief Executive Ian Harrison says Australia has very high safety and quality standards when it comes to making and growing things.

"The simple fact is many other countries, particularly in our region, do not. If you buy imported products you can't be certain about the quality and health standards reflected in the manufacturing or creation of that product."

AQIS randomly tests 5 per cent of foreign foods to ensure compliance with Australian food standards. However, foods considered 'high risk', such as seafood, are referred to AQIS for testing in 100 per cent of cases.

The AQIS Failing Food Report, July to December 2010, uncovered a number of imported products that failed to meet Australian food standards.

The report revealed that 53 per cent of products tested for the highly toxic Hydrocyanic Acid failed to comply with Australian standards and three-quarters of the Chinese foods tested for excess amounts of the chemical iodine didn't pass the quarantine inspections last year.

In July 2011, foreign foods which didn't comply included chilli powder from South Africa in which salmonella was detected, basmati rice from India that was contaminated by insects and salted dried peanuts from China, which contained excess amounts of the chemical chlorpyrifos.

"It's worrying to think that potentially harmful foods could slip through the cracks because 95 per cent of the produce coming into Australia is not tested," Mr Harrison adds.

"However, when you see the Australian Made, Australian Grown logo, you know the product has been made or grown right here in Australia and to Australia's high standards," Mr Harrison says.

Shoppers are being asked to think more about the benefits of buying Australian made products and Australian grown produce over imports.

"Buying Australian also helps create jobs, skills training opportunities and wealth – it underpins our community. The power ultimately rests with shoppers and I encourage everyone to look for the Australian Made, Australian Grown logo so you can be sure what you're buying is genuine Aussie.

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

Ian Harrison, Chief Executive, Australian Made, Australian Grown Campaign

AQIS Failing Food Reports and recall notices from Product Safety Australia are available on request

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