



Australian Government

Australian Quarantine  
and Inspection Service

# What can't be mailed to Australia?



# Quarantine Matters!

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## Australian Quarantine

Food, plant material and animal products from overseas could introduce some of the world's most serious pests and diseases into Australia, devastating our valuable agriculture and tourism industries and unique environment.

## Quarantine and International Mail

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) checks goods arriving at international mail centres, airports and seaports. AQIS officers, x-ray machines and detector dogs screen all of the 150 million items of international mail sent to Australia each year, intercepting around 90 000 items of quarantine risk.

## Tips for sending mail to Australia

- > Do not send prohibited food, plant material or animal products.
- > To find out about product requirements and import conditions visit [www.aqis.gov.au/icon](http://www.aqis.gov.au/icon).
- > Fill out the declaration label clearly and correctly. Make sure you itemise everything inside the package, including any packaging materials you've used.
- > Do not pack items in egg cartons, wooden boxes, or cardboard boxes that have been used to hold fruit, vegetables or meat/smallgoods: this packaging is a quarantine risk and is prohibited.
- > Do not pack with straw or dried plant material: this packaging is prohibited. Use newspaper or foam to wrap fragile goods.
- > Thoroughly clean all footwear, sporting, fishing and camping equipment to remove any soil, seeds or plant material.
- > Tell friends and family overseas about Australia's quarantine laws and ask them not to send prohibited food, plant material and animal products.

You could be fined more than \$60 000 for breaching Australia's quarantine laws.

## What happens to quarantine items?

If something that has been mailed to you is detained for quarantine reasons, AQIS will contact you with a range of options.\*

Treatment may damage goods: AQIS makes every effort to minimise the risk of damage, but does not accept liability for damage that may occur.

AQIS will hold items for 30 days. If you do not contact us in this time, the goods will be destroyed.

\* subject to fees

# Cultural or Seasonal Events and Quarantine

International mail commonly contains items for celebrating cultural or seasonal events. Unfortunately, many of these items must be withheld for quarantine reasons.

EVENT	QUARANTINE ITEMS
New Year	ornaments made with straw, seeds and conifer sprigs
Valentine's Day	fresh and dried flowers
St Patrick's Day	shamrock plants and seeds
Easter	hardboiled eggs, painted eggshells and straw or hay
Chinese moon festival	mooncakes containing egg yolks or meat
Spring	seeds and bulbs (northern and southern hemisphere)
Sukkot	etrog, branches of palm, myrtle or willow
Halloween	pumpkins, corn husk dolls
Christmas	decorations containing pine cones, vine wreaths, spruce; hampers containing prohibited foods including meat and dairy products

Please think about alternative gifts that could be mailed to Australia for cultural celebrations and seasonal events. Tell your friends and family overseas about Australia's quarantine laws—and ask them not to send prohibited food, plant or animal products.

## Why are some items removed when I can buy them in Australia?

Some items that are removed from your mail may be commercially available in Australia. The items you buy in Australia have been commercially produced under strict quarantine conditions. Similar items that are home-made, traditionally produced or purchased overseas could carry quarantine pest or disease risks and cannot be imported.

## What about internet and mail order purchases?

Quarantine laws apply to all goods sent by mail, including goods ordered on the internet or by mail order, such as:

- > flower, tree and vegetable seeds and bulbs
- > food products
- > medicines and other therapeutic products for both humans and animals
- > tea with fruit pieces.

Before you place your internet or mail order, check Australia's quarantine import conditions at [www.aqis.gov.au/icon](http://www.aqis.gov.au/icon)

## Reporting quarantine and export breaches

Report suspected breaches of Australian quarantine, export or food inspection laws to the **AQIS Redline (1800 803 006)**. It is a free telephone service that you can use to confidentially report someone you suspect of breaking Australian quarantine laws. You can also write confidentially to **AQIS Redline**, Compliance and Investigations Program, GPO Box 858 Canberra ACT 2601 or send an email to [compliance@aqis.gov.au](mailto:compliance@aqis.gov.au)

## For more information

If you need more information on related import requirements, visit the following links:

**Customs import requirements > [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au)**  
**Wildlife trade laws > [www.environment.gov.au/travel](http://www.environment.gov.au/travel)**

# What will AQIS **remove** from international mail?

This is not a complete list of prohibited items. Some of these items can be treated and released (fees will apply). Any items containing insects or larvae will be removed and must be treated.

## Meat and Meat Products



- > all uncanned meat—including fresh, dried, frozen, cooked, smoked, salted or preserved meat
- > packaged meals (including noodles) containing meat
- > mooncakes containing meat
- > remedies and medicines containing animal material
- > pet food including canned and dried food and supplements.

## Dairy, Eggs and Egg Products



- > cheese, milk, butter and other dairy products\*
- > packaged meals and other foods containing more than 10 per cent dairy or 10 per cent or more egg (whole, dried and powdered, such as cake mix, salad dressing, mayonnaise)
- > mooncakes containing egg.

## Fruit and Vegetables



- > fresh fruit and vegetables
- > dried fruit and vegetables containing seeds or fruit peel.

## Plants and Soil



- > all plant material including bulbs, whole plants, cuttings, roots, flowers and stems
- > soil, including small souvenir or sentimental samples
- > footwear, sporting and camping equipment contaminated with soil, manure or plant material
- > gifts, ornaments and toys filled with straw, plant matter, sand or soil.

## Seeds and Nuts



- > seeds including vegetable and flower seeds, unidentified seeds, birdseed and some commercially-packaged seeds\*
- > gifts, ornaments and toys filled with seeds
- > pine cones
- > raw nuts
- > grains and legumes including lentils, popping corn and cereal grains
- > raw/green coffee beans.

## Plant Material



- > tea containing seeds, fruit skin (for example citrus and apple peel) and fruit pieces
- > remedies and medicines containing herbs, seeds, bark, fungi and dried plant material\*
- > dried flower arrangements and potpourri
- > dried herbs or leaves
- > handicrafts—including wreaths and Christmas decorations—containing seeds, raw nuts, corn, pine cones, grapevines, bark, moss, straw or other plant material
- > wooden items with bark or signs of insects present.

## Live Animals and Animal Products



- > all mammals, birds, birds' eggs and nests, fish, reptiles, spiders, scorpions, amphibians, crustaceans and insects
- > souvenirs, artefacts and goods made of animal products such as raw hide, feathers, teeth and bones.

## Laboratory Material

- > medical and animal samples
- > diagnostic kits and micro-organisms\*.

\* special conditions apply—check import conditions on AQIS website at [www.aqis.gov.au/icon](http://www.aqis.gov.au/icon).



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**[www.aqis.gov.au](http://www.aqis.gov.au)**

**email: [international.mail@aqis.gov.au](mailto:international.mail@aqis.gov.au)**

## International Mail Centres

### **New South Wales**

AQIS International Mail Program

PO Box 657, Mascot NSW 1460

ph: 02 9897 2108 fax: 02 9897 7728

### **Queensland**

Brisbane Airport Logistic Centre

25-27 Qantas Drive, Brisbane Airport QLD 4007

ph: 07 3246 8678 fax: 07 3246 8681

### **Victoria**

PO Box 1006, Tullamarine VIC 3043

ph: 03 8318 8274 fax: 03 8318 8275

### **Western Australia**

PO Box 606, Welshpool WA 6986

ph: 08 9277 6889 fax: 08 9277 3484

### **Australian Capital Territory**

GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601

ph: 02 6272 3933 fax: 02 6272 3468

**This brochure is available in other languages from AQIS.**

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Information in this brochure is correct at time of printing.

Quarantine conditions may change without notice.

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