

What to look for

When dealing with imported goods or shipping containers the things that you are most likely to see that could be a biosecurity concern are:

- animals
- insects
- plant material, such as leaf litter or seeds
- soil
- pooled water with insect activity around it
- damaged packing materials, such as holes, crumbling timber or frass.



What to do

SEE – As you go about your work each day, you are the most likely person to see if any of these biosecurity concerns have got past our border controls. Keep an eye out for those things that pose a biosecurity concern.

SECURE – If you see something, try to secure it or isolate it. That could be as easy as closing the doors on a shipping container.

REPORT – Let the Department of Agriculture know that you have found something by calling 1800 798 636 as soon as possible.

More information

For further information go to our website:
daff.gov.au/biosecurity/report

This biosphere captures patterns within life using high-contrast photography to focus on the form, structure and detail of some of the objects that Department of Agriculture encounters.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture

Be Biosecurity Aware

SEE. SECURE. REPORT.



Contact
Department of Agriculture
1800 798 636
(Free call in Australia)



daff.gov.au/biosecurity/report

Everyone has a role in protecting Australia's biosecurity

A robust biosecurity system helps protect Australia's agricultural industries, economy, human health and environment from exotic pests and diseases. Australia is free from several biological threats, such as foot and mouth disease, that have had major economic and environmental consequences for other countries.

The Department of Agriculture, along with other government agencies, industry and the community, plays a vital role in maintaining Australia's enviable biosecurity status.

As a member of Australia's importing industry, you also have an important role to play. Many reports of suspected biosecurity concerns come from wharf workers, transport operators, ship's crew, stevedores and depot staff. These reports mean we can respond quickly and stop arriving pests.

You will not be prosecuted if you or someone you know has unintentionally imported material of biosecurity concern, or if you purchased the item in Australia.

What is a biosecurity concern?

Biosecurity is about keeping Australia safe from harmful animal, soil and plant pests and diseases. Animals, insects or anything that can harbour an exotic pest or disease can be a biosecurity concern. This includes things such as plant material and nests.



Animals and insects

Reptiles, birds, mice and even cats have arrived in Australia as stowaways inside shipping containers and on vessels. Animals, their eggs and even their faeces could introduce exotic diseases to Australia that could affect not only our animal health but also our human health.



Bees, snails, ants and other insects could establish as pests or introduce diseases and parasites that present a serious threat to our agricultural industries.

Plant material and seeds

Straw, leaves, bark and other plant material could introduce diseases which present a serious threat to our agricultural industries. Seeds could not only introduce diseases but may also allow exotic plants to establish as weeds in Australia.



Soil

Soil can easily hide the presence of insects, snails, seeds and microbes that can cause animal and plant diseases.



Water

Water can contain organisms including mosquito larvae and algae. Australia is currently free of the mosquitoes that transmit a range of human diseases such as yellow fever.



Packing materials

Imported packing materials made from wood can have borers and other termites hidden inside. If you see holes in timber with frass (sawdust created by borer activity) nearby then it's likely there are live borers inside.

Sometimes plant materials such as rice husks and straw are used as packing materials. These unprocessed plant materials could have seeds which would allow them to establish as weeds or introduce plant diseases to Australia.