

Australia enforces strict Biosecurity measures for 2026 to protect economy and environment

13 January 2026 | News

Australia allocated over \$2 billion to enhance Australia's biosecurity system, including enforcement activities



Australia allocated over \$2 billion to enhance Australia's biosecurity system, including enforcement activities

Australia enforces strict biosecurity measures at airports, seaports, and mail centres to prevent and respond to non-compliance, with penalties including fines, prosecution, imprisonment, and visa cancellations to protect agriculture, food supply, trade, and the economy. Individuals and businesses ignoring these requirements face strong consequences, as breaches could harm crops, livestock, ecosystems, and cost the economy billions.

Enhanced resourcing and enforcement activities, such as inspections and detector dog operations, have intercepted thousands of high-risk items, leading to significant penalties like heavy fines, imprisonment, and revocation of registrations. While Australia's biosecurity system is built on partnership and shared responsibility, individuals and businesses that ignore our strict requirements are subject to strong penalties, ranging from infringements, prosecution, imprisonment, and visa cancellations.

Once threats enter our country, they could harm our crops, livestock, and ecosystems and if left unchecked, could significantly impact agriculture industries, our food supply, regional jobs, trade, and cost the economy billions of dollars. That is why Australia has delivered over \$2 billion in additional resourcing to strengthen our world-leading biosecurity system, including to bolster our sophisticated network of enforcement activities.

Across 2025, biosecurity officers inspected over 280,000 commercial sea and air consignments, preventing tens of thousands of harmful pests, diseases and weeds from entering Australia. Airport interceptions by biosecurity officers reached more than 359,000 travellers, with almost 64 tonnes of meat products being confiscated throughout last year. Biosecurity detector dogs intercepted over 40,000 high-risk items at our airports, seaports and mail centres in 2025, with more than 9,600 detections in the international mail pathway alone.

These inspections led to strong penalties, including an Australian grape export company being fined more than \$1 million for submitting false or misleading documentation to obtain phytosanitary certification and permits to export table grapes to New Zealand.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Julie Collins MP says "Illegal activity â?? whether bringing goods into Australia or sending products out â?? undermines Australiaâ??s biosecurity and our strong global trade reputation. Illegal export activity can also negatively impact legitimate exporters, with significant flow-on effects for Australian farmers and our regional communities. The laws in place are vital to the health of our economy, environment, and the future of Australiaâ??s more than \$100 billion agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.Â

Australia is free from many of the pests, weeds and diseases that affect agricultural productivity and the environment in other parts of the world â?? and our biosecurity officers work tirelessly at our borders and in airports and mail centres to keep these threats out. Weâ??ve delivered over \$2 billion in additional biosecurity resourcing since 2022, have added 20 additional detector dogs around the country, and have more than 1,000 biosecurity officers across Australiaâ??s international airports, seaports and mail centres."