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Subject: MEDIA RELEASE - Risk too great from Malaysian pineapples
Andrew Cripps MP
Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Queensland
Member for Hinchinbrook

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Risk too great from Malaysian pineapples

THE risk from exotic pests was too great to allow imports of fresh pineapples from Malaysia, the LNP said today.

LNP Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Queensland Andrew Cripps said he was particularly concerned of the risk to Queensland's pineapple industry from a range of exotic borers that had the potential to decimate local crops.

"While the Federal government is proposing to allow the importation of de-crowned pineapples from Malaysia there is confusion over what chemicals can be safely used to kill the potential pests that may come to our shores," Mr Cripps said.

Mr Cripps said the advice issued today from the Federal government (Biosecurity Australia) that fresh, de-crowned fruit be allowed into Australia subject to being fumigated with methyl bromide would not sit well with many Australians.

"Methyl bromide is not registered in Australia for use on pineapples and there is worldwide concern with its use and particularly for its link to destruction of the ozone layer."

Mr Cripps said he was concerned that if importers were allowed to circumvent national chemical registration regulations by fumigating fruit off-shore – then Australia would be seen as two-faced.

"Its use has been scaled back here over serious environmental concerns – so surely we should not be condoning its use off-shore."

Mr Cripps said the draft recommendations from Canberra would not please the Queensland industry and needed to be resisted at all costs.

Mr Cripps said the range of exotic pests that could be introduced from fresh Malaysian pineapples included: *Dysmicoccus grassii*, *Dysmicoccus neobrevipes* (grey pineapple mealybug), *Planococcus minor* (Pacific mealybug) and *Pseudococcus jackbeardsleyi* (Jack Beardsley mealybug).

"These are highly damaging pests that we don't need here," Mr Cripps said.

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