



December 4th, 2020

Application A1193 Irradiation as a phytosanitary measure for all fresh fruit and vegetables

To Food Standards Australia New Zealand,

Ontario Group is a multi-generational family farming company producing tropical and citrus fruits in northern Queensland.

We are aware that citrus is yet to be approved under Standard 1.5.3 following research and development activities for our recently planted lemon orchard.

Citrus is produced in many states of Australia and is one of Australia's largest horticultural export categories by volume and value. Lemons are just a small percentage of this business but have significant potential for growth through increased domestic consumption and export development. To achieve this, we need effective biosecurity treatments to enhance distribution and create greater access for consumers.

The citrus industry predominantly relies on cold disinfestation and methyl bromide, both of which can cause severe rind damage to lemons and limes. Due to this concern, our company has invested into research and development for alternate treatments including irradiation.

Irradiation is a very promising treatment for citrus, in particular lemons and limes. Our business also grows tropical fruits that are already exported to numerous markets using irradiation with great success.

I write this letter in support of A1193 because our industry cannot afford to later regret a lack of foresight in pursuing these modern solutions. Australian lemon plantings have increased significantly over the recent decade, much of which is just now maturing into production. It is imperative for our citrus business and the many others like it that citrus crops are approved under FSANZ standard 1.5.3 to ensure it is available to industry if or when needed.

To be successful our industry must employ foresight to predict challenges and create solutions ahead of time. If or when citrus has an urgent need for which irradiation is the solution, neither industry nor consumers could afford to wait 2-3 years for another application to FSANZ.

