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## Chinese apples – you're joking right?

The NSW Farmers' Association says the apple and pear industry is disillusioned with the appeals process regarding apple imports from China.

The Association wrote to the Import Risk Analysis (IRA) Appeals Panel of the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to support the appeal submitted by Apple & Pear Australia Limited (APAL) against apple imports from China.

NSW Farmers' Association Horticulture Committee Chair Peter Darley says APAL has now been informed that four of its objections to the provisional final IRA for apple imports from China were disallowed, and one was found to be outside the grounds for appeal.

"This rejection is a real blow to our local apple and pear industry," Mr Darley said.

"Of particular concern is that the IRA did not assess the potential impact of a Chinese fruit fly, *Drosophila suzukii*, and this was declared outside the grounds of the appeal," he said.

*Drosophila suzukii* has recently emerged as a major pest in the USA, impacting on a range of different fruits.

"When apples are imported from China, the Australian apple and pear industry face an unacceptable risk on new pests and diseases entering the country that also has the potential to affect other markets.

"There is also the matter of Chinese apples competing with the domestic market, and consumer confidence in the quality of produce available for sale.

"We could see Chinese apples in our supermarkets by Christmas despite the fact that genuine concerns about potentially devastating pests have been ignored.

"This is a real blow for the consumer and the farmer in Australia," Mr Darley said.

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