

TABLE GRAPES — IMPORTATION

870. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the decision to allow the importation of table grapes from California into Western Australia on 24 July 2013 and the calls since that date, in particular by the Member for West Swan, for the minister to review that decision.

- (1) What action has the minister taken as a result of those calls?
- (2) Have any National Party members of Parliament asked the minister to reconsider this decision?
- (3) If yes to (2), which members and on what date or dates did they first ask the minister?
- (4) Have any National Party members been briefed by the minister's department on this issue; and, if yes, when?
- (5) What risk assessments have been done and will the minister table a copy of them?

Hon KEN BASTON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) I sought to clarify with the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia—DAFWA—that an independent expert had undertaken an assessment that the importation of Californian table grapes did not pose an unacceptable risk. I sought confirmation that the federal Department of Agriculture was the body responsible for setting criteria for the importation of Californian table grapes. Under our international trade obligations, Western Australia is not able to apply any sanitary or phytosanitary measures that are more trade restrictive than necessary to achieve Australia's appropriate level of protection.
- (2) No National Party member of Parliament has spoken to me to ask me to reconsider this decision.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Officers of the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia were requested to attend a meeting at Parliament House at 3.00 pm on 5 August 2013 to discuss the import of table grapes from California. Hon Terry Redman attended part of the meeting.
- (5) The commonwealth Department of Agriculture—formerly the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry—undertook a non-regulated analysis of existing policy for Californian table grapes imported to Western Australia. The final report was issued on 18 July 2013 and is publicly available on http://www.daff.gov.au/ba/reviews/final-plant/table_grapes_cal-wa.