Pathway selection

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Abstract

All over the world countries try to keep out non-native organisms, the so-called quarantine organisms. Methods to minimise the influx of organisms are border inspections and preventive measures in production chains such as certification. From EU perspective, countries have to take legal measures after a Q-organism has been found. The legal measures are based on risk assessments. In the Netherlands, existing pathways were judged by comparing them with nine criteria, working like following nets with successive finer meshes (Benninga and Hennen, 2012). The criteria were:

1) Volume of import streams per country of origin.
2) Share of planting material per pathway.
3) Number of notifications in the past.
4) Mobility of the Q-organisms.
5) Q-status of organisms.
6) Recurrence of notifications.
7) Crop protection possibilities of the concerning organisms.
8) Export value per organism.
9) Risk for the export balance.

This selection of pathways results in those pathways regarded as most dangerous. Knowledge about organisms and their host plants is essential in this context. The method might be an alternative for the present system of reduced checks. It shows that pathways linked to organisms are even more important than the organisms themselves. For two cases, import of Orchids from Thailand and import of unrooted Chrysanthemum cuttings from Africa, their pathways had been assessed with the objective to improve phytosanitary quality, resulting in less notifications. In both cases a certification system in the first production chain stage would be an effective solution. Inspection before a lot is exported appears to be a cost-effective measure to reduce the risk of introduction (Benninga, et al. 2012).

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