

MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond

**Shadow Minister for
Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
Forests**

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Apple imports a risk we should not have to accept

Changes to laws to allow the import of apples into Australia have thrown a dark shadow over the future of South Australia's \$48 million apple and pear industry.

Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Adrian Pederick, said South Australians have always enjoyed fresh, top quality 'home-grown' fruit but this was no longer assured.

'It is hard to understand this decision to allow the import of produce that could quickly devastate our thriving horticultural industry,' Mr Pederick said.

'We have strict laws to keep out fruit fly from interstate yet we allow actions that could lead to far greater risks of the importation and spread of several other exotic pests and diseases including fire blight.

'The industry itself, which has been an integral part of SA agriculture since the first settlement, is vital to many communities, particularly in the Adelaide Hills.

'This ruling places the entire industry at risk of decimation, and with it local economies and regional employment.

'Prevention and ultimately cure will inevitably raise the cost of local produce, affecting grower competitiveness, hurting export markets and adding an impost on SA consumers.

'While I understand the importance of international trade agreements, we should not be forced to accept them at the risk of damaging the reputation and integrity of our own industry.

'It is to be hoped that the industry's appeal of the decision - should it go ahead - is successful. I call on the state government to do all it can to support our South Australian growers and communities.'