



Wilex Samoa Limited

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Background:

Wilex Samoa has been involved in the Kava Industry in Samoa and the Pacific for over 25 years, predominantly as a trader/exporter as well as partner with kava farmers.

Wilex appreciates the efforts by the Australian government to open up the Pacific Kava Trade with Australia, and support both local and regional industries in working towards compliance with Bio-security, Health and occupational safety of the industry supporting a fair and responsible trade with Australia.

Our company currently exports kava to the Pacific Region, USA; Europe as well as China and has established capacity to comply with Australian requirements for commercial importation of kava from Samoa.

The writer of this submission is also an active participant in the Kava industry in its following roles:

1. Industry representative in the Samoa Codex Committee
2. Chairman of the International Kava Executive Council
3. President of SAME (Samoa Association of manufacturers & Exporters) which organization plays a key role in promoting and fostering export opportunities for the kava industry

Position on Australian Government Consultation- Kava Pilot Phase 2: Allowing Commercial Importation of Kava"

We have reviewed the 2 options proposed for consideration under this consultation process as:

Option 1: Remove kava (in the form proposed for the pilot) from the PI Regulations, making kava in the form specified in the Food Standard 2.6.3 – Kava consistent with other foods imported into Australia, such is the case with the importation of kava in New Zealand.

Option 2: Move kava from Schedule 4 to Schedule 8 of the PI Regulations to allow commercial entities to import kava under permit (under an amended regulation 5H of the PI Regulations).



Wilex Samoa has engaged in consultation with Samoan farmers and the private sector on this matter, and based on this and its own experience in the kava trade, supported the Samoa Government Ministry of Commerce Industry & Labour recommendation for Option 1 as follows:

“Option 1 as a preferred option.

- a. This would bring kava into line with how it is imported into New Zealand and in accordance with the relevant section of the Australia and New Zealand Food Standards Code.
- b. For the benefit of the trial and to allow the relevant agencies to track and monitor the importation of kava under the proposed pilot, we propose that an import permit (IP) is included under Option 1.
- c. As part of the import permit process, importers are required to register their details including their premises where they will trade kava.
- d. This option allows the Government to collect information on the quantities of kava imported into Australia and the importers, and also assist in the monitoring and evaluation component of the pilot.”

Further Support for the Trade, Industry & Consumers

Commercial exporters of Kava products should have accredited facilities that are also HACCP/Food Safety compliance to ensure quality assurance and facilitate compliance with border, bio-security and international requirements for consumer protection.

Conclusion:

We echo the sentiments presented in Samoa’s submission that Kava has been consumed in the Pacific Island communities for over 3000 years without any health issues. Kava is an important part of Samoa and Pacific culture of which Australia is a family of.

Opening the commercial importation of kava into Australian following standard international trade requirements will not only address the concerns expressed by the Australian authorities, but it will in turn assist it’s Pacific family in the Kava Industry to generate income to alleviate poverty in the rural communities of the region and also strengthen the Pacific family bond that Australia has been supporting for many years through its aid for trade programs.

We will be happy to provide further information if required and thank you for the opportunity.

Sincerely

Tagaloa Eddie Wilson
Managing Director