



Hazard Alert: Exotic Pests in Imported Goods

There is always a small risk of finding exotic creatures amongst imported goods, for example, spiders in fresh produce, snakes in containers, scorpions in timber, mosquitoes in used tyres, etc.

The health and safety issues associated with this risk must be managed by employers of workers that may encounter these pests. Employers, such as product importers and retail outlet managers, must ensure the hazards are controlled to ensure worker safety.

Importation procedures aim to minimise the risk of finding exotic pests, but they are not a guarantee that imported products will be pest-free.

Most creatures that are detected are harmless – more eager to run away than attack.

A few creatures, however, present a human health hazard and it is always sensible to take precautions when handling imported products. Be on the watch for venomous snakes, Australian redback spiders and black widow spiders, scorpions and exotic mosquitoes that may be carrying disease.

If you see any type of creature you suspect may be an exotic pest, cover or close the container the creature is in to stop it escaping and call the MAF Hotline 0800 809 966.

