



Submission To:
Food Standards Australia New Zealand

**Regarding Application A1092
Irradiation of Specific Fruits &
Vegetables**

From:
Costa Group – Table Grape Category
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About Vitor Grapes

Costa grapes is a category leader, delivering high quality grapes throughout Australia and internationally. Our focus on varietal development responds to the demands of the market place and we pride ourselves on delivering a range of premium quality table grapes to customers and consumers.

- Products: the Sun World varieties known as Adora Seedless®, Sable Seedless®, Autumn Crisp®, Scarlotta Seedless®, and Midnight Beauty® and the varieties known as Flame Seedless, Red Globe, Crimson Seedless and Autumn Royal
- More than 410 hectares of table grapes under production on farms Australia wide
- Strong third party supply base in all major Australian table grape growing regions
- Between Costa's grapes and third party suppliers, market and sell over 2 million boxes per year
- Prominent importer of Californian table grapes - to meet counter seasonal demand
- Export 25% of product annually
- 52 week supply solution
- Continuous R&D investment into breed and varietal improvement

We are committed to exploring and using biological farming practices in order to reduce reliance on chemical fertilisers, pesticides and other products. We also aim to reduce both water use and diesel use as part of our ongoing commitment to sustainability and the environment.

Innovation in the area of packaging (including zero handling and biodegradable and/or bio-renewable packaging) is a key priority.

Costa's grape category has a strong focus on genetic research and innovation. We work closely with our genetics partner Sun World International LLC, and are licensed to grow their table grape varieties in Australia. Through Sun World, Costa is developing new brands of seedless grapes, both to import as a customer, and to grow here under licence.

We export to over 20 countries, with a focus on markets in Asia and the Middle East.

Reasons for supporting Option 1:

Suspended chemicals

In recent times, Dimeothate and Fenthion have been suspended from use for the treatment of Queensland Fruit Fly on table grapes. The remaining available options for use are cost restrictive and less efficient in the eradication of QFF. Irradiation provides an effective means of postharvest treatment that would substantially decrease the use of pesticides on table grapes.

Post-harvest Treatments

Postharvest treatment fumigation adversely impact quality and shelf life of product. All methods of fumigation require fruit pulp temperature to be elevated from storage temperature of 0-2°C to required fumigation temperatures of approximately 15-18°C. CO₂ & SO₂ fumigation is a commonly used treatment used for exportation of table grapes. Methyl bromide is an ozone depleting substance and acutely toxic to a wide range of insect pests, plants, animals and people. It is used in Australia as a fast acting fumigant in a wide range of situations including as a quarantine and pre-shipment treatment for imports, exports and certain commodities transported interstate. Irradiation provides an effective means of postharvest treatment to eradicate pests whilst maintaining product quality and shelf life of table grapes.

International Trade

Our Export traders indicate that with a treatment like irradiation available, trade opportunities will increase to countries currently restricted by current phytosanitary conditions. In addition to new opportunities, current international market demand has the potential to increase proportionally due to quality and shelf life improvement.