

# DO YOUR WORKERS USE BETEL NUT?

A guide for PALM scheme employers

In Australia, possessing, chewing, and using betel nut is permitted. Importing or mailing betel nut into Australia for personal use (maximum 10kg) is also allowed. However, it is illegal to sell betel nut.



**Selling betel nut in Australia is illegal and may result in fines or imprisonment.**

## What is betel nut?

Betel nut is most commonly used in Asia and Pacific island countries for recreational or cultural purposes.

It typically consists of 3 parts; the betel nut, the mustard stick (korokua) and lime powder.

When this combination is chewed it creates an influx of red saliva in the mouth, requiring the user to spit.

## Can you restrict use of betel nut?

If use of betel nut impedes a worker's function in undertaking their work or impedes the function of your business, you are within your rights to restrict usage before and during work hours, as you are with alcohol use.

If spitting of betel nut is causing a problem to property or work grounds, you can ask that workers use a container to spit into and recommend that the container is washed before reusing or disposed of in a bin.

You cannot restrict a worker's use of betel nut outside of work hours.

## Impact of betel nut

Betel nut is considered a drug, based on the effects on a user. These include but are not limited to:

- a relaxed, happy feeling
- feeling alert
- faster heart rate and palpitations
- red face and feeling warm.

## A large amount or a strong batch of betel nut may cause the user to experience:

- tremors
- dizziness
- upset stomach, diarrhea, or vomiting.

**It is not recommended that workers operate heavy machinery or undertake complex tasks while using betel nut.**

## More information

If you have any questions about bringing or using betel nut while in Australia, you can find more information at these locations:

- Australian Government Biosecurity Betel Nut Conditions, BICON: [www.bit.ly/import-conditions-betelnut](http://www.bit.ly/import-conditions-betelnut)
- Sending country Labour Sending Unit: [www.palmscheme.gov.au/countries](http://www.palmscheme.gov.au/countries)
- Country liaison officers or labour attaché in Australia: [www.palmscheme.gov.au/contact](http://www.palmscheme.gov.au/contact)

BICON

