

I SPY

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SECTION 7

Biosecurity

Introduction

Biosecurity is about the protection of livelihoods, lifestyles and the natural environment that could be harmed by the introduction of new pests (insects, mites, snails, diseases and weeds). Biosecurity is a national priority implemented off-shore, at the border and on-farm. Biosecurity is essential for your business.

Australia's geographic isolation has meant that we have relatively few of the pests that affect plant industries overseas. Freedom from these exotic pests (those that are not present in Australia) is a vital part of the future profitability and sustainability of Australia's plant industries. Biosecurity allows us to preserve existing trade opportunities and provide evidence to support new market negotiations.

Farm biosecurity is a set of management practices and activities that are implemented on-farm to protect a property from the entry and spread of unwanted pests. Farm biosecurity is essential for your business and is your responsibility as well as that of every person visiting or working on your property.

Growers can play a key role in protecting themselves and the Australian grains industry from exotic pests by implementing farm biosecurity. If a new pest becomes established on your farm, it will affect your business through:

- increased farm costs (e.g. changing crop rotations, additional chemical control and implementing other management treatments and strategies);
- reduced productivity (reduced yield and/or quality);
- loss of markets.

For more information on securing your farm, refer to the **Farm Biosecurity Manual for the Grains Industry**.

High priority exotic pest threats to the grains industry

A number of pests present in other countries but not in Australia (exotic pests) have been identified as potential threats to the grains industry at the national level. Some of the medium to high risk 'in crop' exotic pest threats have been included in this I SPY resource manual. Serious consequences would be expected should any of these pests enter and become established in Australia. In addition to the exotic pests listed here, a number of biosecurity pest threats are listed in *Crop Insects: The Ute Guide* booklet, SA (pp. 168-182)/WA (pp. 135-149) and a complete list of the exotic pest threats can be found in the Grains Industry Biosecurity Plan.

Early detection and immediate reporting increases the chance of effective and efficient eradication.

What do you need to do?

New pests will occasionally enter and establish in your crop. Conducting regular surveillance and crop monitoring is a core part of your farm management practices and gives you the best chance of spotting a pest soon after it arrives. The earlier you detect a new pest, the better the chances of eradication.

To effectively detect something new:

- know the normal pests associated with your crops - so you notice anything unusual;
- investigate all crops that are not performing or are showing pest symptoms – get them checked out if you are not sure of the cause;
- record all surveillance activities.

Surveillance at the farm level contributes essential information to regional biosecurity efforts and ultimately to the national status (presence/absence) of a pest.

**If you see anything unusual,
call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline
1800 084 881**

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1800 084 881**

Calls to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline are forwarded to an experienced person in the department of primary industries in each state or territory. Every report will be investigated and treated confidentially.

If you suspect that you have found an exotic plant pest the following general precautions should be taken:

- mark the location of the pest detection and limit access to the area;
- do not allow people, stock and equipment near the affected area;
- wash hands, clothes and boots that have been in contact with affected plant material or soil;
- do not touch, move or transport affected plant material without advice from your state department of primary industries.



Speak to your department of primary industries before sending any samples.

It is essential that the correct sampling protocol is followed including packaging, handling and transport to the laboratory assigned for diagnosis. Incorrect handling could spread the pest further or render the samples unfit for identification.

More information

For copies of the Grains Industry Biosecurity Plan and the Farm Biosecurity Manual for the Grains Industry, as well as information on key exotic pests of the grains industry, visit the Plant Health Australia website (www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/biosecurity/grains) or contact biosecurity@phau.com.au, or your state's Grains Biosecurity officer.

Biosecurity vehicle check list

Carry a biosecurity tool kit in your vehicle. Each tool kit should contain cleaning items for clothing, vehicles and equipment in addition to personal safety gear.

A basic vehicle biosecurity kit should include:

- Stiff brushes and a scraper for cleaning tyres and shoes.
- Dustpan and brush for cleaning inside vehicle cabins.
- Personal safety gear such as rubber boots, rubber gloves, disposable overalls and boot covers.
- Footbath and bucket for disinfecting boots and equipment.
- Approved disinfectant for cleaning down vehicles/equipment.
- Hand sanitiser, soap and a minimum of 5 litres of water.

- A small hand sprayer with a solution of methylated spirits (at the rate of 70% methylated spirits to 30% water).
- Flagging tape to mark sample location.
- Strong plastic and paper bags for collecting samples and sealing items for disposal.

Additional items for an advanced biosecurity kit:

- Camera.
- GPS to record sample collection location.
- Sample jars and plastic boxes for sample collection.