

Who is Plant Health Australia?

Plant Health Australia is the lead national coordinating body for plant health in Australia. We are a not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with industry, governments, researchers and others to facilitate improvements in policy, practice and performance of Australia's plant biosecurity system and to build capability to respond to plant pest emergencies. Our efforts enhance Australia's plant health status, assist trade, safeguard the livelihood of producers and support the sustainability and profitability of our plant industries and the communities that rely upon them.

2

Plant Health Australia and Australia's plant health system

A central role of PHA is the establishment of funding and management arrangements for effective response to emergency plant pest incursions. Emergency Plant Pests (EPP) comprise; known exotic pests, variants of pests already established in Australia, or entirely new pests. PHA undertakes this role through its custodianship and administration of the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD).

The EPPRD is a formal legally binding agreement between PHA, the Australian Government, all state and territory governments and national plant industry peak-body signatories. It covers the shared management and funding of eradication responses to EPP incidents by governments and industries, including the potential for affected growers to receive reimbursement for losses. PHA has a range of programs in place to support operation of the EPPRD, and the capacity of signatories to meet their obligations.

Underpinning the EPPRD is "PLANTPLAN", the agreed technical plan that guides responses to emergency plant pest incidents. It provides nationally consistent procedures for each of the phases of an incident (investigation, alert, operational and stand down), as well as outlining the key roles and responsibilities of industry and government during each of these phases. PHA, as custodians of PLANTPLAN, ensures it is regularly updated to take account of new information and procedural improvements gleaned through post-EPP incident reviews.

PHA assists its Members with a wide range of other EPP response preparedness activities including: contingency planning, surveillance and diagnostic systems support, response training and simulation exercises.

Beyond responses

In plant biosecurity the adage "prevention is better than cure" holds true. Australia's freedom from EPPs delivers benefits ranging from market access and trading advantages to improved productivity, profitability and sustainability for plant-based agriculture. EPPs have the potential to deeply impact on the livelihoods of producers and others along the value chain, damage the economic health of industries and regional economies, deplete amenity values and food security for the broader Australian community, and tarnish Australia's reputation as a producer of clean, quality product internationally. When EPPs are detected early enough, eradication may be an option but these are invariably expensive and technically challenging exercises with no guarantee of success. To keep EPPs from entering Australia, a sophisticated national plant health system (see diagram opposite) operates that:

- monitors pest threats overseas
- manages a border protection program
- monitors for post-border detection of exotic pests
- manage exotic pest incursions should they occur, and
- controls endemic pests on a regional basis.

Beyond its contribution to response arrangements, PHA supports the national plant health system by coordinating and assisting efforts to reduce the risks posed by EPPs. This is achieved in large part by supporting industries and governments to develop strategies and plans that improve biosecurity standards and helping with their implementation.

PHA's core activities are funded from annual subscriptions paid by Members.

A range of special projects are undertaken for individual and sub-sets of Members which are separately funded. PHA Members include the Australian Government, all state and territory governments, national plant industry representative bodies and related industry partner organisations.

Plant pests can have a significant effect on plant crops by reducing yields, lowering the quality of food and fibre commodities, increasing production costs and restricting market access. In some situations, pests can completely prevent the commercial cultivation of some commodities.



The value of PHA Membership

There are mounting challenges being faced by Australia's biosecurity system.

Australia's island status has offered some protection from exotic pests and diseases, but with ever growing and speedier movement of people and produce across state and national borders, our enviable plant health status is being increasingly tested. This situation is exacerbated by the potential impacts of climate change on agricultural production areas and pest-spread, as well as a recognised skills shortage across the agricultural and science sectors.

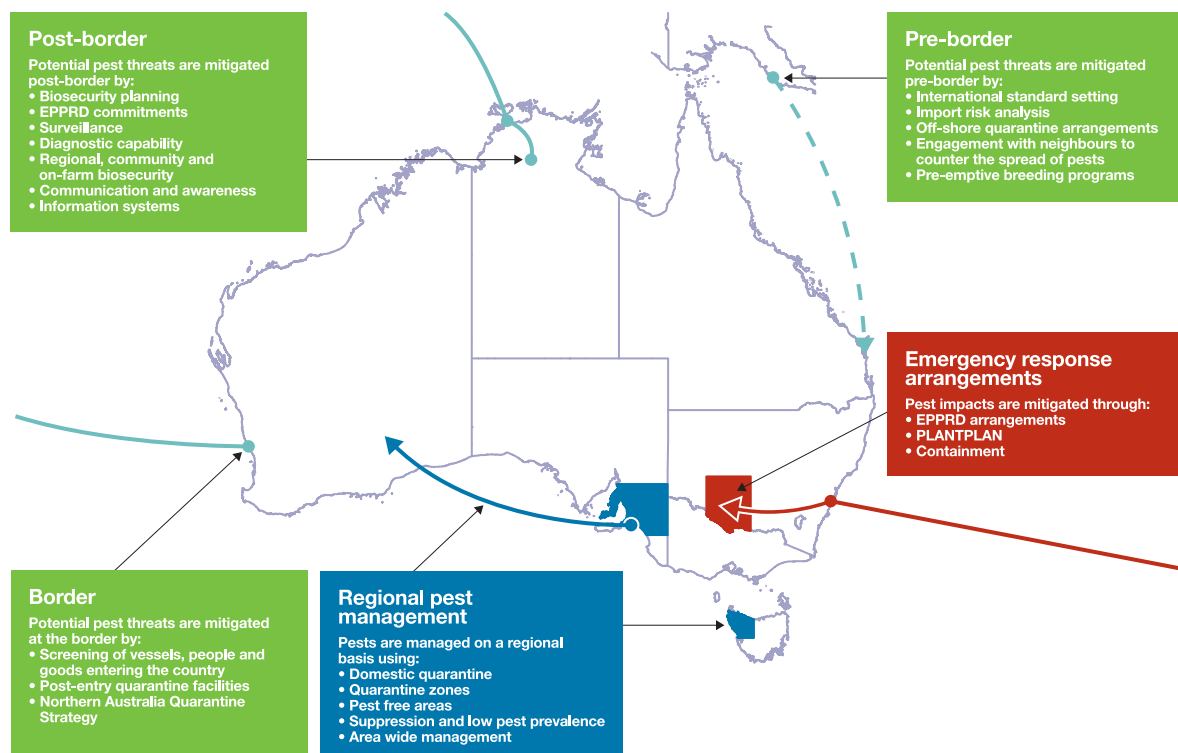
With industry and government increasingly required to do more with less, improved national co-operation and co-ordination will be needed to maintain our pre-eminent plant health status. PHA has a proud history of achievement in brokering agreements and arrangements that have improved the national plant health system. We have led the development of tools, information and networks that have reduced the threat and potential impact posed by EPPs. We have also established a reputation for building biosecurity partnerships founded on mutual trust and goodwill.

Membership of PHA provides:

- access to the benefits of the EPPRD
- access to facilitation services that can be applied to negotiate agreements between stakeholders.
- development and regular review of Industry Biosecurity Plans
- access to convenient and expert technical advice and knowledge
- advice and support for industry risk mitigation and incursion response capacity and capability, including planning, training and communication
- development and administration of information systems and online tools
- advice in the identification, prioritisation and delivery of biosecurity investments
- involvement in development of national strategies to enhance Australia's plant health system
- assistance in the event of an incursion.

Membership of PHA will ensure that your organisation is linked with, and supported by, governments, industries and research organisations and placed in the strongest position to tackle the challenges ahead.

3



Australia's national plant health system



Plant Health Australia (PHA) is the lead national coordinating body for plant health in Australia. PHA works in partnership with industry, governments, researchers and others, providing national coordination to improve biosecurity policy and practice across Australia's plant industries and to build capacity to respond to plant pest emergencies.

For Further details and information please contact:

Phone: 02 6215 7700
Fax: 02 6260 4321
E-mail: admin@phau.com.au
Website: www.planthealthaustralia.com.au



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

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is for general information only and no person should act, or fail to act on the basis of this material without first obtaining professional advice. Plant Health Australia and all persons acting for Plant Health Australia expressly disclaim liability with respect to anything done in reliance on this publication.

Industry Members

A3P
Almond Board of Australia
Apple and Pear Australia Ltd
Australian Banana Growers Council
Australian Dried Fruits Association Ltd
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council
Australian Macadamia Society
Australian Mango Industry Association
Australian Nut Industry Council
Australian Olive Association Ltd
Australian Passionfruit Industry Association
Australian Processing Tomato Research Council Inc
Australian Table Grape Association
Australian Walnut Industry Association
AUSVEG
Avocados Australia
CANEGROWERS
Canned Fruit Industry Council
Cherry Growers of Australia Inc
Citrus Australia
Cotton Australia
Grains Council of Australia
Growcom
Nursery and Garden Industry Australia
Onions Australia
Ricegrowers' Association of Australia
Strawberries Australia Inc
Summerfruit Australia Ltd
Wine Grape Growers' Australia
Winemakers' Federation of Australia

Government Members

Australian Government
ACT Government
Northern Territory Government
NSW Government
Queensland Government
South Australian Government
Tasmanian Government
Victorian Government
West Australian Government

Associate Members

Australasian Plant Pathology Society
BSES Limited
CSIRO
Cotton Research and Development Corporation
Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity
Grains Research and Development Corporation
Horticulture Australia Ltd