

National Plant Health Status Report Official Launch

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Australia now has a single document that provides a current and concise overview of its plant health system. The *National Plant Health Status Report 08/09* was launched today at the Global Biosecurity 2010 Conference by Plant Health Australia (PHA), the lead coordinating body for plant biosecurity in Australia.

The 180 page Report provides a wealth of information covering the plant pests of greatest concern to Australian industries, the organisations and processes involved in keeping Australia's agricultural and forestry industries free from pests, and innovative plant health research projects currently being undertaken by Australian research organisations and universities. It is a consolidated summary of the system that helps protect Australian agricultural and forestry industries, worth more than \$45 billion a year, from plant pests.

"This Report provides policy and decision makers across governments and industries an overview of the sophisticated biosecurity system responsible for protecting Australia's food supply and product markets. It is a useful reference manual for educators and those providing support and commercial services to the plant industry. It also demonstrates the robustness of Australia's plant health system and should build confidence in the quality of Australian plant products," said Dr Tony Gregson, Chairman of Plant Health Australia.

The *National Plant Health Status Report* identifies, among other things, details for the 2008/09 financial year nearly 300 high priority plant pests that are exotic or of significant quarantine concern to Australia. It also highlights over seven hundred biosecurity research and development projects currently underway or completed in Australia, and the 137 surveillance programs targeting plant pests of concern across the country.

"The cooperation between all the stakeholders, both government and industry, that helped develop the *National Plant Health Status Report* has been remarkable and I would like to thank everyone involved," said Greg Fraser, Executive Director and CEO of Plant Health Australia.

A copy of the *National Plant Health Status Report* is available on the PHA website at www.planthealthaustralia.com.au.

For more information, or to arrange an interview, contact:

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Global Biosecurity 2010 Conference

Background

Biosecurity has become a major economic issue of concern to Australia's government, the environment and agricultural industries. It has emerged as a relatively new field of concern for researchers across a range of disciplines, spanning both the traditional sciences (such as pathology) and the social sciences (including economics, risk analysis and risk communication), and carries a range of concerns that are unique to the area. Despite its wide impact and complexities, there have, to date, been limited opportunities for scientific exchange (amongst researchers, and with end-users) around the central theme of biosecurity.

Conference objectives

The aim of the conference is to provide a forum for biosecurity researchers and stakeholders to:

1. workshop, network and exchange knowledge on agricultural and environmental biosecurity
2. facilitate engagement and cross-fertilisation of ideas between researchers and their end-users (industry, regulators and other end-users), and
3. build cross-disciplinary networks across all biosecurity related disciplines.

The conference also aims to position Australia and, in particular, the event's proponent organisations as world leaders in agricultural and environmental biosecurity research and management.

Proponent organisations

Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre for Emerging Infectious Disease

www.abcrc.org.au

The Australian Biosecurity Cooperative Research Centre for Emerging Infectious Disease has developed new capabilities to detect, identify, monitor, assess, predict and respond to emerging infectious disease threats which impact on national and regional biosecurity. Research outcomes include new systems to detect pathogens, improved understanding of the ecology of emerging infectious diseases, epidemiological tools and syndrome surveillance systems.

Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity

www.crcplantbiosecurity.com.au

The Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity coordinates plant biosecurity scientific research throughout Australia. Our research programs cover the full biosecurity continuum; pre-border, border and post-border demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding Australia's plant industries. We also provide education and training in plant biosecurity through various activities. We have an extensive collaborative network of researchers and educators from 23 participating organisations representing industry, universities, state and federal government.

Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre www.invasiveanimals.com

The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre and our 41 partners work together to reduce the impacts of invasive animals, which cost Australia over \$750 million each year. We aim to develop practical, cost-effective and socially-acceptable products and strategies, helping agricultural industries and Australian landscapes, and saving native animals and plants from extinction.