

National Biosecurity Plan for the **NURSERY and GARDEN INDUSTRY**

Plant biosecurity and National Biosecurity Plans

Australia's geographic isolation has meant that the region has been relatively free of many pests that have wrought havoc on plant industries overseas. Freedom from these exotic pests is a real trade benefit for Australia in terms of securing market access domestically and internationally. Maintenance of our plant health status is vital for retaining existing trade opportunities, negotiating access to new overseas markets and ensuring the future profitability and sustainability of our plant industries.

Plant Health Australia (PHA) is a public company, with Members including the Australian Government, all state and territory governments, and a range of plant industry organisations representing all major crops grown in Australia. Using our existing relationships, PHA works with Members to identify, prioritise and manage key plant health risks. A key way of doing this is via the development of national biosecurity plans for each of our plant industries.

PHA has reviewed and finalised the National Biosecurity Plan for the Nursery and Garden Industry. This was done in collaboration with industry and government stakeholders. This National Biosecurity Plan will be launched at the 2008 NGIA National Conference.



Plant Health
AUSTRALIA



Nursery & Garden Industry
Australia



National Biosecurity Plans – an industry's blueprint

National Biosecurity Plans are an industry's blueprint for providing the best possible protection against new plant pests. The nursery and garden plan covers:

- ✓ the highest risk pests to the nursery and garden industry (threat identification and analysis);
- ✓ how the industry guards against exotic pests (risk mitigation activities);
- ✓ how an industry will know when an exotic pest has arrived (surveillance)
- ✓ how to identify exotic pests (diagnostics); and
- ✓ how the industry deals with exotic pests if they are found (contingency plans).

The benefits of developing and implementing National Biosecurity Plans include:

- ✓ a more rigorous basis for strategic planning, due to a structured consideration of key risks;
- ✓ assistance in setting priorities for further action & investment in biosecurity;
- ✓ reduced costs, with early detection and management of biosecurity risks;
- ✓ effective and efficient biosecurity programs;
- ✓ greater transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making and ongoing management processes;
- ✓ optimisation of resources;
- ✓ reduced loss/incident damage;
- ✓ government and industry ownership of decisions, and a commitment to delivering real outcomes; and
- ✓ the capacity to examine arrangements across the plant industries.

Developing a National Biosecurity Plan for the Nursery and Garden Industry

The development of each National Biosecurity Plan begins with the production of Threat Summary Tables which contain the Emergency Plant Pests for your industry. These tables identify all the exotic pests of the industry and with expert consultation rank their potential threat based on entry, establishment, spread and economic criteria. From this information the high priority Emergency Plant Pests can be established for which diagnostic protocols and contingency plans are created. These high priority pests provide a focus for further risk mitigation activities such as surveillance, on-farm biosecurity and awareness activities. As the Nursery and Garden Industry encompasses such a wide range of plant species, a definitive high priority list has not been generated. Instead, a table showing the linkages that the Nursery and Garden Industry has to plants covered in other IBPs is included in this section. These other IBPs are available from the PHA website (www.planthealthaustralia.com.au).

CASE STUDY

Phytophthora ramorum – an Emergency Plant Pest of the Nursery and Garden Industry.

The disease has reached epidemic proportions in California where it is causing widespread death of oak and tanoak trees and is commonly known there as 'sudden oak death'. It has also been found on a wide range of other trees and plants native to North America. In the US, the pathogen was originally considered a woodland disease but it has also been found damaging nursery plants in several US states and Canada.

This disease has been found to infect a wide variety of species from North America, Europe and the UK. Some of the host identified to date include:

- Maidenhair fern (*Adiantum* spp.)
- Firs (*Abies* spp.)
- Oaks (*Quercus* spp.)
- *Camellia* spp.
- *Magnolia* spp.
- Oleander (*Nerium* spp)
- Rose (*Rosa* spp.)
- Maple (*Acer* spp.)
- *Eucalyptus* spp.
- *Viburnum* spp.

Natural dispersal of *P. ramorum* is by drifting plant material, waterborne and soilborne chlamydospores, and by waterborne, soilborne and possibly airborne sporangia.

There are no known vectors of the disease other than man. *Phytophthora ramorum* has been proven to be effectively moved through the trade of ornamental plants and green waste. There is evidence that mature compost will not be infectious.

Early detection is the key to eradicating the Sudden oak death if found in Australia. To minimise the risk of spread, samples should not be moved until they have been checked by an expert.

You may report suspected exotic pests to the **Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881)** or by directly contacting your relevant state agriculture or primary industries department.

Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the National Biosecurity Plan for the Nursery and Garden Industry visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6260 4322.

