

NATIONAL POTATO INDUSTRY BIOSECURITY SURVEILLANCE STRATEGY 2020-25

SUMMARY

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Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment



Summary

Overview

The potato industry within Australia is the single largest vegetable crop by volume and one of the largest vegetable/horticultural industries, with an annual production of around 1.3 million tonnes worth \$745 million in 2019.

The potato industry can be considered in three distinct sectors: processing potatoes, fresh or ware potatoes, and seed potatoes. While producing the same crop, these sectors are structurally unique, growing different varieties and with separate commercial relationships.

While pests may have different impacts on these sectors, in overall terms, the potato industry is free from many significant exotic pests that impact production and trade overseas, and Australia has a comprehensive biosecurity system that minimises the likelihood of their introduction and establishment. For some significant pests that are only present in certain regions in Australia, biosecurity measures serve to minimise their spread. Despite these systems, protecting the potato industry from new pest introductions remains a continual challenge, due to the ever-increasing volumes of people, cargo and mail reaching our shores every year.

New pest introductions can impact people, production and profitability in a variety of ways. These include quarantining of production facilities, disruption or closure of domestic and international markets, loss of livelihoods, an increase in production costs, changes to the complexity of crop management, increases in chemical usage and disruption to Integrated Pest Management systems. To minimise these impacts, surveillance and crop monitoring can improve the likelihood of early detection, providing the greatest chance of eradication before a pest becomes firmly established, or allowing timely containment measures to be applied to limit its spread. Surveillance, and the collection of data and information on the presence or absence of pests, also provides vital evidence that supports international and domestic market access.

From an individual grower's perspective, the consequences of the detection of an exotic pest can be financially and socially significant. Within the growing community, and the agronomists that support them, there are challenges with surveillance, ranging from a lack of awareness about key pests, to a level of reticence to report a suspected exotic pest because they are unaware of the support systems in place or they regard these systems to be inadequate. Growers also have a lack of faith in being adequately compensated for the true extent of damage incurred as the result of an incursion response.

The development of arrangements that identify, prioritise and coordinate surveillance activities and address and resolve impediments to surveillance and reporting will have long term significant benefits for the potato industry. The ability to capture, collate and share surveillance information will build knowledge that will drive greater efficiency in the biosecurity system, improve incursion response and support market access outcomes.

Purpose of the strategy

This National Potato Industry Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy (NPIBSS) has been developed to provide a framework for peak potato industry bodies and governments to identify and coordinate national surveillance priorities and activities across stakeholders for the benefit of the potato industry. The NPIBSS will support surveillance and effective biosecurity across the biosecurity continuum to ensure the potato industry is informed, resilient, engaged and globally competitive.

Once implemented, this strategy will facilitate activities that capture and collate potato industry surveillance data nationally from commercial production, urban and peri-urban areas and high risk sites. Improving surveillance will provide valuable information to improve the response to exotic pest incursions, support domestic and international market access, and improve pest management.

Scope

The NPIBSS provides a framework for implementation of industry pest surveillance activities in the ware, processing and seed sectors of the potato industry, and the formation of partnerships with government across the continuum of pre-border, border and post-border. Responsibilities for pre-border and border lies with the Australian Government and post-border with state and territory governments and industries. For pest surveillance that crosses multiple industries, the NPIBSS actions seek to develop linkages with government jurisdictions and other plant industries.

Strategy goals and principles

Four interconnected goals, and their accompanying actions, will form the basis of the strategy that will outline improvements to national surveillance. Implementation of the NPIBSS will improve engagement and communication, identify and reduce barriers to undertaking surveillance and reporting of new pests and promote national capture, sharing and consistency of surveillance data to improve efficiency in biosecurity management within and between industry and governments.

For surveillance activities to be widely adopted, they must integrate as much as possible into existing crop monitoring undertaken by the potato industry, in conjunction with support from tools and systems that harmonise and improve collection of information.

Success of strategy implementation will be measured by the ability to monitor, capture and analyse crop monitoring data, achieve early detection of new pests and provide evidence of pest status that supports market access. Activities will be delivered and monitored through the Implementation Plan that supports this strategy.

Strategy implementation

The associated NPIBSS Implementation Plan details how this strategy will be implemented, including the importance of strong support from stakeholders, governance arrangements, and secure funding arrangements.

The long-term outcomes sought through this strategy are:

- active support and participation of the potato industry in surveillance
- skilled personnel who are available to support surveillance for key pest threats of the potato industry
- improved decision making, support for crop health management and reduction in business risk.

Once implemented, this strategy will support these outcomes and facilitate the capture and collation of potato industry surveillance data nationally including regions, farms, urban and peri-urban areas.

Roadmap of biosecurity surveillance to support the potato industry

Vision statement	To support surveillance and biosecurity management to ensure the potato industry is agile, informed, resilient, engaged and globally competitive				
Goals	Goal 1 Collaboration and coordination	Goal 2 Early detection	Goal 3 Communication, awareness and training	Goal 4 Industry growth and business resilience	
Objectives					
Long (5–8 years)	Shared decision making and collaboration to support biosecurity outcomes	Growers reporting suspect pests and providing data to support market access	Skilled personnel able to undertake surveillance to support the potato industry	Industry actively participating in biosecurity surveillance	
Medium (3–4 years)	Implementation plan supported and monitored with sustainable funding mechanism in place Surveillance data captured, analysed and shared Harmonised practices across jurisdictions and industries Business continuity plans in place	Reporting tools available and used Surveillance protocols developed and used Barriers to pest reporting and collection of data addressed Surveillance for exotic pests integrated into routine crop monitoring Surveillance undertaken in urban and peri-urban communities	Improved communication between government and industry Development and delivery of training to support surveillance	Improved diagnostic capacity to support surveillance efforts Decision-making and support for crop health management and reduction in business risk implemented Barriers to data capture and sharing addressed On-farm biosecurity practices adopted and implemented	
Short (1–2 years)	Partnerships to support surveillance identified and initiated Agreement between state jurisdictions and preparedness plans in place to support domestic market access Development of business continuity plans commenced	Planning and prioritisation of key pest targets and locations for surveillance commenced Information delivered to growers on incursion responses Mechanisms identified to address barriers to pest reporting and collection of surveillance data	Mechanisms identified to support engagement within industry and between industry and government Training and support materials developed for industry personnel	Gap and stakeholder analysis undertaken for diagnostics Systems and tools for data capture identified and implementation commenced Mechanisms to support sharing of data identified Development of farm biosecurity plans commenced	
Stakeholders					
Australian Government	State governments	PHA	Potato industry, AUSVEG	Other plant industries	Urban and peri-urban communities

Summary of goals and actions

Goal 1



COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

Action 1.1	Develop and maintain national collaborative arrangements including funding to support surveillance and diagnostics for potato pests
Action 1.2	Establish partnerships to support surveillance for pests of the potato industry
Action 1.3	Develop business continuity plans and establish market access arrangements for key potato industry pests

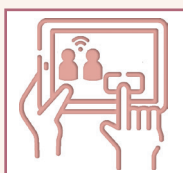
Goal 2



EARLY DETECTION

Action 2.1	Address barriers to surveillance and reporting
Action 2.2	Identify and prioritise key potato pest threats, high risk areas and surveillance methods
Action 2.3	Integrate surveillance for exotic and regionalised pests into existing commercial crop monitoring practices and systems
Action 2.4	Improve surveillance for exotic and regionalised pests in urban and peri-urban communities
Action 2.5	Improve consistency and efficiency of surveillance through development of tools, protocols, technologies and plans

Goal 3



COMMUNICATION, AWARENESS AND TRAINING

Action 3.1	Develop communication and engagement mechanisms to support surveillance
Action 3.2	Develop training to improve capacity and capability for surveillance

Goal 4



INDUSTRY GROWTH AND BUSINESS RESILIENCE

Action 4.1	Establish mechanisms, systems and tools for the national aggregation of data to support market access and inform biosecurity decision making
Action 4.2	Improve diagnostic capacity to support surveillance efforts
Action 4.3	Develop farm biosecurity plans to support preparedness and surveillance outcomes



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