

CEO MESSAGE (TENDRILS AUGUST 2022)

Hi, I'm Sarah Corcoran, CEO of Plant Health Australia. Welcome to our August edition of Tendrils – your monthly round-up of plant biosecurity news.

After being in development for more than a year, the inaugural National Biosecurity Strategy was released last week providing the strategic direction for Australia's biosecurity system until 2030.

The strategy builds on existing work such as the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy, National Fruit Fly Strategy and industry biosecurity plans. The strategy aims to address and prepare us for the changing biosecurity environment by strengthening and expanding partnerships, empowering a shared biosecurity culture, coordinating preparedness and response capability and securing long-term sustainable funding.

For over two decades, Plant Health Australia has operated by these principles, protecting the profitability and sustainability of our plant industries for the benefit of all Australians. Leveraging our knowledge and expertise will see significant opportunities for us to continue to bring stakeholders together to ensure the system is future-orientated and solutions-focused.

One of the ways we do this is through science – which is at the core of the work we do at PHA. That's why this National Science Week, I'd like to invite you to explore with us the important role science plays in plant biosecurity and celebrate how science assists us to develop tools and information to help keep Australia free of exotic plant pests and diseases.

A well-publicised exotic disease that is on our doorstep is Foot and Mouth disease. While this highly contagious animal disease affects cloven-hoofed animals, we recognise the potential impact it may have on mixed producers, should it arrive in Australia. With the support of our sister organisation, Animal Health Australia, we hosted an intro to FMD webinar to assist our members including how to protect and prepare their properties. For more info on FMD visit animalhealthaustralia.com.au.

For a number of years, the Farm Biosecurity Program, a joint initiative between PHA and AHA has been educating plant and livestock producers by providing practical on-farm biosecurity information and tools and raising awareness of how these practices can reduce the risk of pests and diseases. Late last month, a new three-year strategy and implementation plan was presented at a joint PHA-AHA board meeting with further collaboration opportunities to increase efficiencies explored between the two organisations.

This month, we welcome our new starters;

- Matt Hill as our Digital Systems Manager
- Dr Cheryl Grgurinovic as our Diagnostics Manager
- Carolyn Bromley as Project Officer in the Emergency Response Team and
- Mandy Jarvis as our Marketing and Communications Specialist

Also, congratulations to Andrew Vossen who has been promoted to Biosecurity Planning Coordinator.

Once again, we've got another bumper edition lined up for you with a good mix of information and stories from a range of sectors.

Happy reading!