

Subcommittee on Domestic Quarantine and Market Access Communiqué—SDQMA42

The Subcommittee of the Domestic Quarantine and Market Access (SDQMA) met on 29 April to 1 May 2014. Regular meetings of the committee ensure continued communication between members on regulatory arrangements for domestic quarantine and trade. The committee discussed the following points with key issues highlighted below:

- regulatory and legislation changes in each jurisdiction
- the status of current pest outbreaks
- updates on a Varroa Mite exercise and the National Fruit Fly Strategy
- site visit to Pohlman's Nursery to observe the Biosecure HACCP in practice
- changes to the SDQMA terms of reference addressing privacy, confidentiality and conflict of interest

Quarantine Domestic website

The Committee discussed potential changes to the Quarantine Domestic (QD) website and the possibility of combining it with the SDQMA website. The single website could use a joint homepage that would allow users to find quarantine information as either a public traveller or commercial user. The Committee also recognised other benefits in modernising the website, including a simpler web platform, easier and remote access for updating information and reducing duplicating of information.

National Plant Biosecurity Strategy

Plant Health Australia (PHA) has started a review of the National Plant Biosecurity Strategy (NPBS). All governments and industry members endorsed the strategy in 2010. The Committee members received a NPBS questionnaire seeking views on the status of activities under the strategy and opportunities for improvements. Early feedback indicates that the strategy is still current, though it should take a more holistic view of the national biosecurity system with consideration of where actions and resources should be committed.

BioSecure HACCP Trial

The Committee members received an update on the progress of the Biosecure HACCP trial in Queensland and Victoria. Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) was the primary pest regulated in consignments from Victoria to Queensland. Implementation of the risk-based model for PCN in Victoria resolved many of the domestic trade concerns for Queensland, thereby reducing the need for issuing certificates from Victoria under the Biosecure HACCP trial. Queensland were able to issue certificates for a number of consignments of nursery stock. SDQMA will consider continuation of Biosecure HACCP after completion of a report by a third party auditor.

Pohlman's Nursery visit

The Committee visited Pohlman's Nursery in Gatton on the 30 April 2014 to observe the Biosecure HACCP trial in practice. Members found the demonstration of HACCP very informative and noted that the system extended beyond biosecurity to the whole of production management system, and that a number of cost savings had been made by the nursery as result of the system. An audit of the trial is required to determine its effectiveness in meeting the domestic trade requirements.



State/Territory Pest and Disease Area Freedom claims

The Committee discussed how jurisdictions could claim freedom from pests and diseases. The absence of a clear process with standards for development, surveillance and terminology, has meant it has been difficult to issue pest freedom certificates. The Committee agreed that a policy is required to give states and territories the confidence to issue the certificates. It will incorporate the capability for industry surveillance and align with international export requirements.

Progress update on Potato Cyst Nematode test trials

The Committee received an update on the under-harvester trial of soil testing for Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN). Currently there are two testing centres for PCN—Crop Health Services (Victoria) and SARDI (South Australia), and to date only the SARDI results are available. Early analysis suggests that the tested methods used for soil collection appear to be a statistically valid.

Conditions Database (CODA)

The Department of Agriculture sought advice from the Committee on support for an interstate Conditions Database (CODA). The intent would be a single site where users can find what the interstate plant movement conditions are. This would save jurisdictions providing information directly to the public and would allow jurisdictions to update the page as conditions change. The Committee supported the Department in seeking funding for the development of a business plan for CODA.