

# VEGETABLE AND POTATO BIOSECURITY PROGRAM



National Vegetable  
Extension Network

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## SUMMARY

Biosecurity preparedness has reduced the risks and threats of the world's pests and diseases arrival, and prevented major outbreaks, in Australia.

Population growth, increased trade and passenger volume, and increasing imports from a number of countries are increasing biosecurity risk to Australia, despite its geographical isolation. The Australian vegetable industry's response to this increased risk includes investment in planning programs which build resilience to exotic pest and disease incursion.

Biosecurity planning provides a mechanism for the vegetable industry, government and other relevant stakeholders to actively determine pests of highest priority, analyse the risks they pose and put in place procedures to reduce the chance of pests becoming established - and to minimise the impact if a pest incursion occurs.

Risk minimisation and effective threat response procedures are vital for the future sustainability and viability of the Australian vegetable industry. Through pre-emptive planning, the industry will be better placed to maintain domestic and international trade, negotiate access to new overseas markets, and reduce the social and economic costs of pest and disease incursion on growers and the wider community.

## WHATS INVOLVED

The Vegetable and Potato Biosecurity Program (co-managed by Plant Health Australia and AUSVEG, employs two Vegetable and Potato Security officers (VPBOs), Jessica Lye and Callum Fletcher, whose role is to improve biosecurity risk preparedness and response mechanisms for the vegetable industry on a nation-wide scale. The program has been running for over three years, with the current phase funded until June 2019. Jess and Callum facilitate cooperation between vegetable and potato growers, government departments and industry groups for the purposes of raising awareness around biosecurity best-practice in production regions.

## EXTENSION FOCUS

Extension activities are a major focus of the biosecurity program. Jess and Callum frequently speak about the program and biosecurity best-practice at industry meetings and events. In September 2016 the VPBOs visited the Greater Sydney region and co-hosted a biosecurity workshop with Greater Sydney Local Land Services.

Aside from national extension activities, the biosecurity program aims to produce practical biosecurity resources for growing operations. One product developed from the program is the vegetable and potato industry guidance booklet named appropriately as DIY Biosecurity. The booklet includes checklists and risk assessment templates and aids in development of an on-farm biosecurity plan.

## WHERE TO FIND RESOURCES

DIY Biosecurity, and related biosecurity resources developed by the program, can be found on the AUSVEG website at [ausveg.com.au/biosecurity](http://ausveg.com.au/biosecurity). The program also releases a biosecurity e-bulletin that includes pest updates and regular articles in vegetables and potatoes Australia magazines. The program also provides a mechanism for the vegetable and potato industry to be represented at biosecurity forums and during exotic pest incursions (under the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed). All available biosecurity resources developed by the program are being translated into Khmer and Vietnamese.

## ENGAGEMENT WITH VegNET

The VPBOs welcome the opportunity to tie in extension activities with the National Vegetable Extension Network for the length of the current project which concludes June 2019.

For further information on the program contact the AUSVEG National Manager –Science and Extension, Dr Jessica Lye at [Jessica.lye@ausveg.com](mailto:Jessica.lye@ausveg.com) or at 03 9882 6722.