

Improving plant health surveillance in the nursery industry

The overarching aim of this project is to understand how plant health surveillance and reporting may be improved in the nursery industry. Improved surveillance and reporting will assist producers to safeguard their livelihoods and increase productivity and competitiveness of the industry.

The Research

This project focuses on how to design and implement a plant health surveillance system that encourages nursery producers (growers who produce and/or on sell plant stock) to engage in best practice plant health surveillance. It forms part of a broader project, *National grower-led surveillance system: A method for developing effective grower-led surveillance systems for plant production industries in Australia*, funded by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. This project is part of the Australian Government's [Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper](#), the government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy. The project aims to enhance plant health surveillance among the 39 plant production industries who are signatories to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed.

What is involved in this research?

To understand how the nursery industry surveillance system can be improved we need input from a range of producers and stakeholders in the industry. Industry stakeholders will be invited to take part in a face-to-face or telephone interview. Producers will be invited to take part in either a telephone or online survey. All information gathered will be kept secure and confidential and will be de-identified in any publication from this study.

The CSIRO researchers will seek information on the following main topics:

- Current state of the plant health surveillance system and on strategies and initiatives led by the Nursery & Garden Industry Australia intended to improve pest surveillance and reporting
- Key challenges and barriers for plant pest and disease monitoring and reporting in the nursery industry
- High risk segments or pathways for the introduction and spread of pest and diseases within the industry
- Factors or approaches that could improve producer engagement and surveillance practices in the industry

What are the next steps?

Stakeholder interviews have already commenced (January, 2018). The survey of producers will be conducted in February-March, 2018. A case study report will be prepared for the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. This report will be shared with the industry's peak body, Nursery & Garden Industry Australia.

Interested in knowing more?

Please contact Dr Cathy Robinson or Dr Chris Chilcott for further information.

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