

Notes from the Board

Attendees: Malcolm Letts (Chair), Mike Ashton, Stephen Lowe, Jim Pekin, Andrew Serra, Lynne Turner and Rhiannon Evans (Program Leader)

Transition to industry: Industry Transition Leader appointed

The Board was informed of the ABGC's appointment of an Industry Transition Leader (ITL) who will commence work with the Panama TR4 Program in mid-March. With full transition due to take place from 1 July 2023, the ITL will start building the framework for how the industry will manage Panama TR4 into the future.

Technical Working Group considers changes to destruction zone

The Technical Working Group held its first meeting on Thursday 4 February 2021 undertaking a review of the destruction zone to better meet the practical needs of growers while continuing to control and contain the disease. The Board's endorsement would see the proposed changes submitted to Biosecurity Queensland with all infested properties to be informed accordingly.

Panama TR4 in the Tully Valley: Epidemiological review to commence

Following the Board's endorsement of an epidemiological review study (December 2020), Panama TR4 experts will arrive in Far North Queensland next month to undertake a study of the disease's progress in the Tully Valley. The review will consider the NT situation, international experiences and scientific knowledge to inform the future management of Panama TR4, and is expected to be published in May 2021.

Q2 Program Report highlights

The Board was presented a Quarterly Report to show the Program is tracking well for its year-to-date (YTD) targets. Here are some highlights of the Q2 Program Report (Oct to Dec 2020).

Operations

- 11 306 Ha surveillance completed YTD (on track for full completion by Q4)
- Infested property compliance included 34 audits, 15 risk item inspections, 30 fruit inspections, and the supervision of 3 destruction zones and activities under 5 biosecurity instrument permits.

Communications & engagement

- Produced 5 videos, 2 factsheets, 7 social media posts, 6 ABGC articles, 9 BQ articles and attended 10 meetings to keep stakeholders informed of Panama TR4.

Diagnostic services

- 13 samples investigated with 7 testing positive (on existing infested properties).

Policy and planning

- APVMA approved minor use permit for bifenthrin in destruction zones
- Policy development included:
 - Risk assessment for the movement of cattle to live export
 - Investigating the process to undertake DNA extraction from soil on an infested property
 - Participating in a risk assessment of movement of banana leaf material from the NT to QLD
 - Developing a Project Plan for an epidemiological review
 - Examining the options for changes to Panama TR4 destruction zones
 - Developing a Standard Operating Procedure for processing fruit from an infested property at packing shed on land not subject to a notice (not infested).

General enquiries about this notice:

Call Rhiannon Evans, Program Leader on 07 4091 8141
or Sonia Campbell, ABGC on 0428 038 330

Grower enquiries to the Board:

Call Jim Pekin on (07) 3278 4786

**Next
meeting
April
2021**

**Panama
disease
tropical
race 4**

