

Notes from the Board

Sharing the responsibility of managing Panama disease tropical race 4 has been the combined goal of both the Australian Banana Growers' Council (ABGC) and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) for four years now. The collaboration and consultation that has taken place since the disease was first detected in Queensland in 2015 has been historic in many ways, and remains a high priority for both parties.

The unique partnership between the ABGC and DAF will continue beyond 30 June 2023. Extension activities, research and development projects and enforcement of regulation will continue to be led by the Department to support the ABGC in their leadership of disease management from 1 July 2023.

Science forum – Panama TR4 research update

A science forum held after the Board meeting updated Board members and banana growers on the latest Panama TR4 research projects. Attendees heard updates on:

- Using e-noses and volatiles for earlier detection by Andrew Hayes
- Suppression of Panama disease and the role of the core microbiome by Dr Tony Pattison
- Using genomics to support diagnostics by Jane Oakey
- Alternative banana varieties by Jeff Daniells.

A summary of each presentation will be included in the next edition of the Panama TR4 Update.

March's Board meeting was the last meeting for two Board members:

- Malcolm Letts, Chair of the Board and Deputy Director General and Chief Biosecurity Officer, DAF
- Mike Ashton, General Manager and Chief Plant Health Manager, Plant Biosecurity and Product Integrity, DAF.

Both Malcolm and Mike were thanked by the Board for their continued support during the transition process and received well wishes for their upcoming retirement.

The Board first convened in April 2020 to formalise the joint industry and government partnership that has successfully governed the Panama TR4 biosecurity response in Far North Queensland since 2015. The next Board meeting in May 2023 will mark the final stages of government leadership of the biosecurity response. The motivation and enthusiasm shared between the parties to achieve a highly effective disease management program for industry continues to grow as the end of transition becomes nearer.

**Next
meeting
23 May
2023**

General enquiries about this notice: Call Rhiannon Evans, Program Leader on 07 4091 8141 or Sonia Campbell, ABGC on 0428 038 330

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The Panama TR4 Program is a joint initiative between the Queensland Government and the Australian Banana Growers' Council.

**Panama
disease
tropical
race 4**

