

Got a job to do on a banana farm?

Make sure you don't spread Panama TR4!

Panama disease tropical race 4 (Panama TR4) is a fungus that kills banana plants.

It's one of the greatest threats to worldwide banana production. It's in Far North Queensland and if not controlled it could have a huge impact on our Australian banana industry and communities.

When you work on a banana farm you must make sure you don't spread Panama TR4.

The fungus lives in the soil and it's easily spread

by the movement of infected banana plants and contaminated soil and water. Anything that moves them can carry the disease, including people, vehicles, machinery, equipment and animals.

If you are visiting or working on a banana farm, here are some steps you can take to prevent spread of Panama TR4:

Plan – forward planning can make your job easier

Work with the grower – they are likely to have rules on their farm about access and cleaning (particularly if the farm has the disease)

Come clean – bring essential equipment, vehicles and machinery only and make sure it's clean when you arrive

Leave clean – ensure everything you take off the property is cleaned and disinfected.

For more information visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au or call **13 25 23**

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Looking after our banana industry

Panama TR4 is very easily spread by the movement of infected banana plants and contaminated soil and water. Anything that moves contaminated soil or plant material can carry the disease, including people, vehicles, machinery, equipment and animals. Make sure this doesn't happen - it's up to all of us to stop the spread of Panama TR4.



On properties known to have Panama TR4

You'll see notices and quarantine information signs when you arrive at the property. The law requires the grower to have risk minimisation procedures in place on the farm; they will tell you what they are. It's important that you follow the grower's instructions carefully.

On properties not known to have Panama TR4

The biosecurity measures outlined in this guide are good practice to stop the spread of the disease. Different farms may have different procedures—find out what you need to do when the grower gives you permission for entry. Always arrive with clean tools, equipment, vehicles and machinery. Make sure they are clean when you leave.

What you need to do

Plan — forward planning can make your job easier

Think about what you are doing on the property. Work with the grower to minimise the risk of your activities spreading disease.

- Can you schedule your work for when it's dry to make cleaning your equipment and vehicles easier?
- Can you undertake your work in the separation or exclusion zone of the farm?
- Can you leave your machinery on site for the duration of your work to save decontamination cleaning time?
- How easy is an item to clean? Can you use another instead? For example, a hard esky instead of a fabric lunch cooler-bag?
- What is essential for the job? Don't take what you don't need to use.
- Does the grower have something you can use instead that can remain on the property?
- Can you leave tool carry cases or bags behind?
- Can you put small personal items in plastic bags to keep them clean or leave them in the car?
- Where is it best to perform the work? For example, a broken pump might be moved to a shed rather than taking all your tools to the paddock.
- Can you use a plastic ground cover sheet to lay your tools and equipment on?
- Will disposable coveralls, half pants or gloves stop you from being contaminated and needing to clean up afterward?
- Can you operate your electronic devices (e.g. phone, GPS) from inside a sealed plastic bag?



Work with the grower – they are likely to have rules on their farm about access and cleaning.

- Discuss your intended activities with the banana grower
- Find out what requirements they have in place regarding entering the farm. For example, some farms will provide boots for use on the property, other times you may need to bring your own
- Follow their instructions carefully and completely.

There might be some difference in procedures at different farms but you can expect to:

- Park your car in a designated visitor parking area
- Phone the grower on arrival at the front gate (keep in mind mobile reception is limited in many areas)
- Change your boots on arrival or walk through a footbath in your own shoes
- Sign a visitor register and complete decontamination records
- Drive through dips and sprays for disinfection if you are entering the banana production and growing areas
- Be restricted from entering certain areas
- Be driven around to various parts of the farm or given a farm vehicle for use
- Be advised to follow particular footpaths and not to climb over barriers or fences
- Use only formed roads (bitumen or dirt) and never to drive through paddocks
- Have your footwear inspected by the property owners.



Come clean

Ensure all tools, vehicles, equipment, machinery and other things that you bring to the property are clean, so they don't have soil or plant material that could carry diseases or pests.

Some growers may deny access if you arrive with soil or plant material on your vehicle or machinery.



Leave clean

If you must take things onto a farm known to be infested with Panama TR4, they must be cleaned and disinfected upon exit. Soil and plant material can carry the disease.

Clean and disinfect anything that's been in contact with soil or plants before you leave the farm. This includes your footwear, your personal items, your vehicles and all equipment. The grower will instruct you on how to do this and what facilities to use. If a grower does not have decontamination facilities you may choose to wash and decontaminate using your own equipment. If you don't do this properly, you could move the fungus and spread the disease.

Record your decontamination activities as instructed by the grower or in your own notes/register.

If you are moving equipment, machinery or vehicles off a property known to have Panama TR4, you and your equipment may need to undergo inspection. Talk to the grower about this process.

If you are leaving a farm not known to have Panama TR4, the above biosecurity measures are still considered good practice to stop the spread of the disease. Always follow the grower's instructions.

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4 step cleaning for entering

The simple 4 step cleaning process must be used to ensure decontamination of all things exiting a banana property (tools, vehicles, equipment, machinery and other things). Where you can, avoid contamination of items and yourself with banana plant material and soil to make cleaning much easier.



1

Clean and scrub

off all soil, plant material, debris and grease at the identified wash down pad. Use compressed air for any areas that might not easily clean with water (such as for radiators) then use a brush, water and detergent to scrub all surfaces so they are free of soil and plant material. You might need to use high pressure water.



2

Rinse all surfaces

with clean water. Detergent may reduce the effectiveness of disinfectant products.

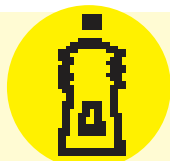


Workplace and environmental health and safety



Follow the instructions on the label of detergents and disinfectants, as well as any safety and technical information that the manufacturer provides. If you need to use other products in a way not included on the product label, you will need to comply with a current permit from the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (the APVMA).

and leaving a property



Cleaning products

Detergents for step 1

Most industrial and domestic brands of soaps, detergents and degreasers are satisfactory and the best choice depends on the situation and the things to be cleaned.

Disinfectants for step 3

For appliances, vehicles, machinery, equipment, tools, and boots use products containing quaternary ammonium compound which is a known effective disinfectant against a range of pathogens found on agricultural farms. Always use products in accordance with the chemical label's directions or relevant APVMA permit.



3

Disinfect

Apply an appropriate disinfectant in accordance with the chemical label's directions or relevant APVMA permit. An additional rinse step may be considered following disinfection.

4

Check and record

Undertake a final check to ensure all areas have been cleaned. Record details each time a vehicle or piece of machinery is cleaned and disinfected.



If you need more information, please contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23. We can provide training packages on the disease and decontamination processes.

More about Panama TR4

and why we need your help to stop its spread to new places.



What is it?

Panama disease tropical race 4 (Panama TR4), a fungus that kills banana plants, is one of the greatest threats to worldwide banana production. It is in Far North Queensland and could have a devastating impact on our Australian banana industry and local communities.

The fungus lives in the soil and it's easily spread by the movement of infected banana plants, and contaminated soil and water. Anything that moves them can carry the disease, including people, vehicles, machinery, equipment and animals.

What is at stake?

The Queensland banana industry is the largest horticulture industry in the state with a value of approximately \$600 million and around 12,000 hectares under production in North Queensland.

The banana growers in North Queensland are valued members of the community and they provide employment to many. Uncontrolled Panama TR4 places all this at risk.

How is it controlled?

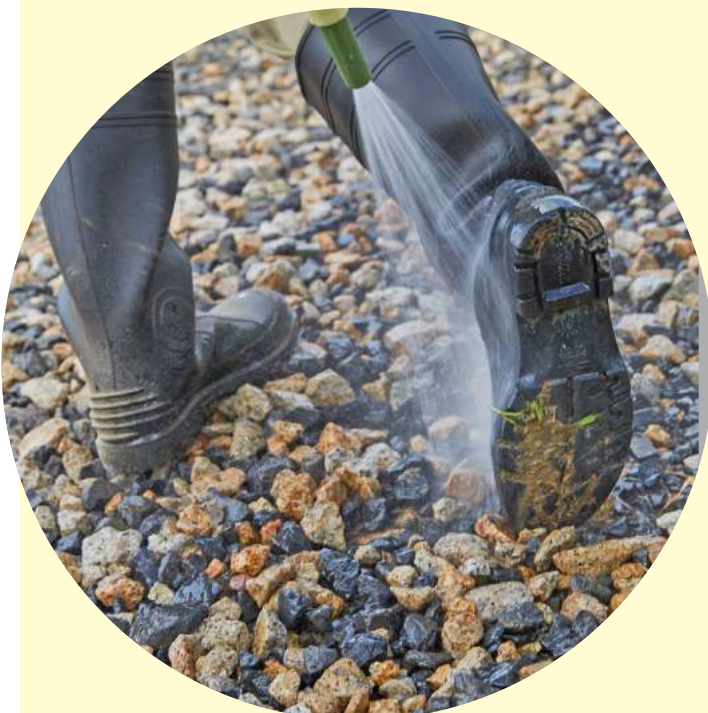
At the moment, there is no way of getting rid of the Panama disease fungus once it's in the soil.

Banana growers, the broader banana industry, the community and Biosecurity Queensland are all working together developing and implementing actions to minimise its spread. So that's why we need your help to stop its spread to new places.

DID YOU KNOW?



Panama TR4 could be in the dirt of your shoes - it only takes one speck of dirt to move the disease.



In an emergency

If there is an emergency situation (a risk to health, life, property or the environment) and you need to visit a banana farm at very short notice, you must:



Dial ahead – contact the grower where possible



Come clean – only take necessary vehicles, tools and equipment, and where possible make sure they are clean



Travel along formed roads (bitumen or dirt) using the shortest practical route where possible



Leave clean – vehicles, equipment, and footwear must be cleaned of soil and plant material. Due to the emergency situation, this may not be possible on exit. Wash your vehicle and equipment as soon as practical.



Try to keep out of banana paddocks

If you have entered a property known to have Panama TR4, contact Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 as soon as practical.





For more information visit biosecurity.qld.gov.au or call 13 25 23

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