

## Notes from the Board

As part of the Panama TR4 Program Management Board (Board) activities, there are several ongoing commissioned research projects into Panama TR4. The intended outcome of this work is to offer the banana industry insights that will assist with future disease management.

At this most recent meeting, Dr Tony Pattison provided an update on the progress on one of these projects, microbiome research.

Dr Pattison is undertaking research on the behaviour of Panama TR4 in the soil within destruction zones. The destruction zone is the area of land where banana plants that pose a biosecurity risk related to Panama TR4 have been destroyed. Once the infected banana plants have been destroyed, the area is covered in urea and black plastic. Dr Pattison's research looks specifically at how the inoculum of *Fusarium odoratissimum* (formally known as *F. oxysporum* f. sp. *ubense*) (Panama TR4) behaves in soil across different destruction zones.

Further updates will be provided to the Board and findings delivered in future Snapshot reports.

### Transition to industry

The Industry Transition Leader, Geoff Wilson provided an update on recent discussions with banana growers regarding how industry plans to manage the disease from 1 July 2023.

Geoff also provided an update on the development of the Code of Practice (CoP). This piece of work is being developed in consultation with an external specialist and incorporates grower feedback from earlier meetings. An initial draft of the CoP will be completed by August 2022 and circulated to growers for review.

### Technical Working Group update

The TWG recently met and discussed surveillance options for the industry to consider post 1 July 2023.

The Technical Working Group (TWG) is made up of Panama TR4 Program and Australian Banana Growers' Council (ABGC) representatives, collaborating to resolve scientific and technical issues that are complex by nature. Advice from other experts may also be sought from time to time.

The ABGC will identify the preferred option of future surveillance at the next Board meeting in September 2022.

The Board first convened in April 2020 to formalise the joint industry and government partnership that has successfully managed Panama TR4 in Far North Queensland since 2015. The next Board meeting in September 2022 will mark only nine months until disease management is handed over from government to industry in July 2023. This will be a historic moment for both the Queensland government and the Australian banana industry, and will ensure Queensland's banana production will continue in the presence of Panama TR4.

**Next  
meeting  
Sept.  
2022**

**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

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

**Panama  
disease  
tropical  
race 4**

