

A full guide to the Notice of presence of Panama disease tropical race 4

Introduction

A Notice of presence of Panama disease tropical race 4 (notice) is a document given under regulations listing the requirements a property owner or occupier (grower) must meet to contain the disease and protect the broader industry from the spread of Panama disease tropical race 4 (Panama TR4).

The intent of the notice is to restrict soil and plant material from leaving the affected land and to minimise the risk of disease spread.

The notice is given to a person and prescribes the land parcels to which it applies. While the disease is regulated by the [Biosecurity Act 2014](#) and the [Biosecurity Regulation 2016](#), the affected land will continue to be subject to a notice.

There are several sections that make up the notice. In this guide about the notice, each section is separated into the intent, legal requirements and considerations.

Intent:	The aim of the section.
Requirement:	Processes and procedures to discharge your general biosecurity obligation.
Considerations:	Examples and other information to assist with understanding.

Each section has also been categorised as a notification, standard and or process:

Notify	Inform Biosecurity Queensland (BQ) of changes so that the biosecurity risk can be minimised. All sections that require notification to BQ are listed in Table 1 on page 6.
Standard	Physical measure that must be put in place.
Process	The operational approach to an activity, the way something is done or how a standard is used.

Note:

This document is not designed to replace the notice but aims to assist growers to understand the legal obligations of the notice when Panama TR4 is detected on a property. A [sample notice](#) is attached and available for viewing on the Queensland Government publications website.

A list of definitions is provided on page 6.

Sections of the notice

1.1 Use of the land (notify)

Intent:	To ensure that any changes to ownership or to land use are notified to BQ.
Requirement:	Notification must occur at least 30 days before the change commences.
Considerations:	Leasing blocks, succession-planning, diversification. The property will continue to be subject to a notice (while the disease is regulated by the Biosecurity Act 2014 and the Biosecurity Regulation 2016) irrespective of land use.

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

1.2 Restricting access to affected land (standard)

Intent:	To deter unauthorised access by vehicles and people to the affected land.
Requirement:	Physical barrier with signage (specifications include size, wording, location) around the perimeter of the affected land.
Considerations:	Natural or built barriers (includes deep drains, permanent water courses). Signage placed at easy to access locations, gates, corner posts.

1.3 Zoning (standard)

Intent:	To maintain clearly separated areas within the affected land to minimise spread of the disease.
Requirement:	Clearly defined areas (destruction, dirty, clean zones) using barriers and signage.
Considerations:	<p>The destruction zone is a permanently fenced 10-metre-radius area of land that surrounds the plant/s confirmed to have Panama TR4. Animal proof fencing is required for the destruction zone.</p> <p>Dirty zones are areas where on-farm operations occur (production areas) and may pose a biosecurity risk due to the potential presence of the disease.</p> <p>Clean zones include areas the public can access (such as roads, parking areas, some areas of the packing shed) and are not subject to contamination by the disease.</p> <p>The packing shed has both clean and dirty zones to allow fruit to transit from the dirty zone to a clean zone for consignment.</p> <p>The clean access road into the property allows the transfer of goods and supplies to and from public use areas.</p> <p>Prior to receiving a notice, a property is considered a clean zone requiring protection from outside risks entering the property. Once a property is subject to a notice, this is reversed i.e. the area outside the infested property boundary is considered clean and the banana production area is considered dirty.</p>

1.4 Decontamination sites (standard)

Intent:	To have dedicated areas for cleaning and disinfecting items (such as vehicles, tools).
Requirement:	Located close to the access point of a clean zone. The site is suitably equipped for decontamination (i.e. with pressure sprayer, brushes, detergent, disinfectant). Wastewater does not directly enter a clean zone or waterway.
Considerations:	Cleaning is the removal of soil and plant material from the item. Disinfecting is using a chemical product known to be effective for Panama TR4. Types of equipment used for cleaning include high-pressure sprayers, hoses, brushes. Should be located close to the clean and dirty zone boundary to limit contamination of the item once it is clean and disinfected and prior to movement into a clean zone or public land.

For information about moving people through these areas, refer to section 1.7 People movement.

1.5 Movement of risk items from dirty zones (notify, process)

- Intent:** To ensure items being moved from the dirty zone do not contaminate clean zones or land not subject to a notice.
- Requirement:** All risk items must be decontaminated before being moved out of the dirty zone via a clean zone or off the infested property.
- All movements of appliances and banana trailer tops must be recorded and records kept for 12 months.
- For appliances: notify BQ no less than 48 hours prior to movement.
- Considerations:** Trailer tops that are roll-on roll-off systems with fruit being present or absent: These must be free of any harborage points (e.g. holes in the structure or rips in the mats).
- Appliances include the range of items from a single part of a machine (e.g. attachment) through to a complete machine. Examples of an appliance include tractors, harvester, slasher, bagging machine, pump.
- All other risk items include everything else that is not a trailer top or appliance, such as tools.
- Risk items can be moved from one dirty zone to another dirty zone without full decontamination if they are moved in a way that prevents contamination of the clean zone or land not subject to a notice (for example, black plastic can be laid down to allow a tractor to cross a public road).

1.6 Movement of fruit for human consumption from affected land (process)

- Intent:** To ensure all fruit is free of soil and plant material before leaving the property.
- Requirement:** Field activities – fruit is harvested from healthy plants, grown above ground, and kept free of soil and other plant material.
- Shed-based activities – containers are kept free of soil and plant material and all waste is retained in the dirty zone. All containers are new or decontaminated re-usable crates and kept free of soil and plant material.
- Considerations:** Packing shed consumables and packed fruit must remain in the clean zone.
- Some interstate jurisdictions may require biosecurity certification stating that the fruit meets plant quarantine entry conditions.

1.7 People movement (process)

- Intent:** To limit the movement of soil and plant material from dirty zones by people and their personal equipment or items.
- Requirement:** Training staff in biosecurity practices including how to decontaminate risk items.
- Providing facilities for staff to move from dirty zones in a way that minimises the biosecurity risk (such as supplying bags for laundering clothes).
- People movement must occur in a way that minimises the biosecurity risk.
- Considerations:** Requires training material (for induction, toolbox talks) and signage.

Examples of facilities include change rooms, bags for dirty clothes.

External parties conducting work on the property must comply with the biosecurity practices.

1.8 Waste management (standard)

- Intent: To manage waste from the dirty zone to minimise the risk of disease spread.
- Requirement: To dispose of waste within the dirty zone, or in a way that minimises the biosecurity risk.
- Considerations: Waste material includes leaves, bells, discarded fruit, pseudostem material, bunch stalks, bunch bags, string, decontamination water, and soil.
- Waste is contained within the dirty zone or transferred to an approved [quarantine waste facility](#).

1.9 Maintenance of destruction zones (process)

- Intent: To maintain established destruction zones so that they are free of banana plants and remain undisturbed.
- Requirement: To keep the destruction zone free of regrowth, for fencing and signage to be maintained, and risk items to be decontaminated before being removed from the zone.
- Considerations: Comes into effect when the disease is confirmed to be present in the host material through diagnostic testing and a destruction zone is established.
- Regrowth must be destroyed by chemical means and left to die where it stands.

1.10 Record keeping (standard)

- Intent: To keep records that detail how the risk minimisation processes and procedures of the notice are being met.
- Requirement: To have and maintain records for the below list for a period of 12 months:
- biosecurity management plans
 - banana planting records
 - fruit and other produce consignment information
 - staff training register
 - an inventory of appliances
 - the movement of risk items (appliances, banana trailer tops)
 - destruction activities.
- Considerations: Records must be made available to BQ on request.

1.11 Weed control (standard)

- Intent: To restrict soil movement from the dirty zones during weed control activities.
- Requirement: To control weeds in a way that minimises the biosecurity risk.
- Considerations: Slashing shouldn't be undertaken during windy weather.
- Chemical control should be undertaken along clean /dirty zone boundaries.

1.12 Emergency access (notification, process)

- Intent:** To plan with emergency service providers the procedures to follow for emergency access to the property.
- Requirement:** Emergency service providers are made aware that the disease is present on the property and precautions should be followed (where possible) when accessing the property.
- Decontamination must occur at the earliest possible time on or off site.
- Notify BQ if emergency access to dirty zones occurs.
- Considerations:** Emergency service providers to be notified are Queensland Ambulance Service, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire Service, State Emergency Service, local council and electrical providers.
- A property map with access points and contact details should be provided.

1.13 Earthworks (notify)

- Intent:** To ensure that soil and water from dirty zones does not enter clean zones during new earthwork activities.
- Requirement:** Notify BQ prior to work being undertaken.
- Considerations:** Examples of earthworks includes new work like the construction of a new shed, new fencing, constructing new internal roads.
- Undertake in suitable weather conditions and don't make unnecessary soil movement.

1.14 Farm-based animal movement (standard)

- Intent:** Farm-based animals are managed in a way that minimises the movement of soil and plant material from dirty zones.
- Requirement:** Livestock, poultry and domestic animals are managed in a way to minimise the biosecurity risk.
- Considerations:** If possible, prevent or limit animals being present on the property (those not present for commercial gain).

1.15 Irrigation removal (standard)

- Intent:** To manage used irrigation hardware from the dirty zone in a way that minimises the biosecurity risk.
- Requirement:** Irrigation is removed in a way that minimises soil disturbance and is disposed of in a way that is consistent with waste management requirements.
- Considerations:** Used irrigation hardware is contained within the dirty zones or transferred to an approved [quarantine waste facility](#).

Please note

Other sections may be included in the notice depending on land use (such as mixed cropping, cattle production) and operational activities.

Notifications

The sections of the notice that require the grower to notify BQ of activities are listed in the below table.

Table 1. The list of items that BQ requires notification for and the notification period.

Section of the notice	Notification period
Use of the land	30 days before the change commences
Movement of risk items from dirty zones (appliances only)	At least 48 hours prior to the movement taking place
Emergency access	At the earliest possible time
Earthworks	Prior to the activity taking place

Definitions

affected land means land that a notice under s. 58 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2016 applies to.

appliance includes machinery, tractors, harvesters, sprayers, planting equipment, trailers, farm implements, pumps, quad bikes or vehicles or any of their parts.

authorised officer means an authorised person or an inspector appointed under Chapter 10 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014*

clean means items or areas known to be free of the disease (Panama disease tropical race 4) or free of any substances (e.g. plant material, soil, mud or dust) that may carry the pathogen (the tropical race 4 strain of *Fusarium odoratissimum*)

clean water means water that has not come into contact with agricultural soil, or banana plants, or has been treated to remove contaminating organisms (e.g. bore water, rain water that is collected directly into a tank, town water, chlorinated river water, or water from the Mareeba-Dimbulah Irrigation Scheme).

decontaminated means free of contaminating substances including plant material, soil and other growing mediums and disinfected.

dirty means an area or zone of a property, or an item that may be a contamination risk.

disinfect means application of a sanitiser product known to be effective to minimise the spread of Panama disease tropical race 4, that has been prepared with clean water and in accordance with the label instructions or permit requirements.

Earthworks means the process of excavating and embanking earth for engineering or agricultural construction and /or operations, excluding general farming practices and existing maintenance.

inspector means a person appointed under s. 242 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.

Notice means a written notice that is given to the owner or occupier of the land or the person with possession or control of the plant when it is known or there is reasonable belief that there is a significant risk that Panama disease tropical race 4 is present on land; and or in a plant.

risk items means items including appliances that have been in contact or may have come in contact with plant material or soils on which banana plants are growing, have been grown or may have been grown or other growing mediums on which banana plants are growing, have been grown or may have been grown.

For further information

If you require further information or assistance, please contact the Panama TR4 Program on (07) 4091 8140 or email panamatr4@daf.qld.gov.au

DISCLAIMER: The information contained within this guide is based on the current legislative provisions in the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (Act) and subordinate legislation that are in force at the time of writing.