

# Detecting and reporting suspect pests



GRAINS FARM  
BIOSECURITY  
PROGRAM

Australia has one of the strictest border control systems in the world but there is always the chance that an exotic pest will make it into the country. The numbers of passengers and imported goods is increasing all the time, and a serious exotic pest of the grains industry might only be a day's flight away.

There are steps that you can take to protect your farm and the grains industry as a whole.

**Pest** is a term that covers all insects, mites, snails, nematodes, pathogens (diseases) and weeds that can damage plants or plant products.

## Monitor your crops

Monitoring the health of your crops is a fundamental part of farm management and gives the best chance of finding grain pests early enough to treat them before they spread into a much larger problem.

Pay particular attention to high risk areas where pests are most likely to enter and establish on your property. This includes along public roads, periodically flooded country or areas that may be missed when spraying such as along fence lines.

## Check crops and stored grain for pests regularly

Early detection is particularly important in the case of exotic pests that could slip through border controls. A new pest in your crops might not only be new to your farm but also new to the region or the country.

## Report anything unusual

Early detection and reporting of a suspected exotic pest gives the best chance of eradicating it and minimising the long-term impact on your farm.

If you see something that you think could be an exotic pest call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881 without delay.

## What happens if I call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline?

Calls are forwarded to an experienced person in your state or territory government, who will ask some questions and arrange for an assessment of what you've found. All reports will be followed-up and treated confidentially.

Do not send samples until you have received advice on the correct way to sample, pack and transport them to a laboratory assigned for diagnosis.



Check and seek advice about poorly performing areas



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Sorghum downy mildew an, exotic pest of sorghum.



Barley stripe rust an, exotic pest of barley.

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## What do I do if I find a suspect pest?

If you suspect the presence of an exotic plant pest, the following precautions should be taken immediately to contain the pest and protect other parts of the property:

- Do not touch, move or transport affected plant material.
- Wash hands, clothes and footwear that have been in contact with affected plant material or soil.
- Mark the location of the pest detection and limit access to that area.
- Restrict the movement of people, stock and equipment near the affected area.

## Reporting if a resistant variety becomes infected

Crop varieties that are rated as resistant to particular pests can prove sensitive to that pest in time. It might be that the pest has evolved to overcome the resistance, or it could be a new strain that has entered Australia.

If the variety that you planted was rated as resistant but becomes seriously infected you should report it without delay.

Further information, factsheets of key exotic plant pests, or a copy of the Grains Farm Biosecurity Manual, is available at the Grains Farm Biosecurity website [grainsbiosecurity.com.au](http://grainsbiosecurity.com.au), the Farm Biosecurity website [farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://farmbiosecurity.com.au), or from your state Grains Biosecurity Officer.

The Grains Farm Biosecurity Program is managed by PHA and funded by growers through Grain Producers Australia together with the governments of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia. Grains Biosecurity Officers in these five states develop and deliver materials to raise awareness and deliver training to growers, consultants and other industry stakeholders. Go to [grainsbiosecurity.com.au](http://grainsbiosecurity.com.au) for more information.



Cabbage seed pod weevil, an exotic pest of canola.



Russian wheat aphid, an exotic pest of winter cereals.

For a full list of Grains Biosecurity Officers in your region, visit [grainsbiosecurity.com.au/contact](http://grainsbiosecurity.com.au/contact)

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**1800 084 881**

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