

Exotic plant pests

Plant pests and diseases can have a big impact on our agricultural industries, environment and economy. The Australian Government is responsible for preventing pests and diseases from entering Australia.

We all play a role in looking out for new pests and diseases that may arrive in Australia from overseas. We call these exotic pests.

When an exotic plant pest is found, your state or territory government will let us know. They will then do what they can to:

- identify the pest,
- determine how widespread it is,
- contain it, and
- identify and apply control measures.

Next, we need to decide if the pest is nationally significant. That is, if it significantly impacts our agriculture, environment or economy. We also need to decide if eradication is an option. This depends on whether it is:

- possible to eradicate the pest, and
- cost effective to do so.

We coordinate this decision-making process with the input of state and territory governments and any affected industries.

If the pest is nationally significant and eradication is possible and practical, we will work together to eradicate the pest.

The impacted state or territory government leads the response, with national oversight. The costs of eradication are shared according to national emergency response agreements.

If the pest is not nationally significant or national eradication isn't possible, the state or territory with the pest is responsible for local eradication or ongoing management.

One of the most important parts of successfully eradicating or managing a pest is early detection. If you think you have found a suspicious pest or disease, report it as soon as possible to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.

Keeping Australia free of exotic pests and diseases is particularly important for our environment and also our farmers who want to export their products. You can learn more about this in our 'Export Processes' video.