# Seed viruses (tobamovirus)

* There are a range of seed viruses that pose a significant biosecurity threat for Australia.
* Tobamoviruses are highly infectious seed viruses of many horticultural crops including tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, melons and capsicums.
* Tobamovirus was first identified in tobacco plants with mottled leaves, and so was named Toba-mov-virus.
* These viruses are also known as seed viruses because they infect seeds and are primarily spread around the world through the global vegetable seed trade.
* But that’s not the only way these viruses can travel.
* These viruses can survive for long periods of time on leaves, gardening implements, and on the surface of the soil, which means that they can easily be spread by contact.
* Plants that have become infected display a range of different symptoms depending on the type of host plant, the climate and the strain of the virus.
* If a seed is infected by this virus the seedlings may become stunted and pale.
* The leaves of a diseased plant become deformed and mottled, and the fruit are unsaleable.
* These viruses can cause serious economic loss and threaten our food supply.
* Seeds and plants are regularly intercepted at the border, at our airports and mail centres, so there is a real risk these viruses could arrive through that pathway.
* If you are travelling to Australia or purchasing goods from overseas, make sure you follow our import conditions and don’t bring in seeds or plant material.
* It’s important to keep an eye out and report any potential seed biosecurity risks within Australia.

(TEXT AT THE END: Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment)