

Biosecurity Advice - Update

Pest

Citrus Canker *Xanthomonas citri*

Date

Feb 2019

Location

WA and NT

Situation overview

- The nationally coordinated response to locate and remove plants affected by citrus canker is on-track.
- On-the-ground response teams remain in place in the Northern Territory and are progressing with removal and disposal activities.
- Western Australia has completed its removal and disposal activities. It is now conducting post destruction surveillance in the Restricted Areas to confirm that citrus canker is absent.
- There are fifteen infected premises in the Northern Territory and three in northern Western Australia, following successful tracing activities.
- This number may increase as tracing, surveillance and community reports identify the location of infected plants. Finding these infected plants provides confidence that the tracing and communication systems are working.
- Evidence to date indicates that citrus canker is still restricted to potted plants in the home and garden sector, and all infected premises are linked to a single source premise in Darwin.
- The majority of citrus canker infections have been found on three different varieties of lime but grapefruit and lemons are also high risk plants.
- Citrus canker has not been detected in any commercial citrus orchards or in any other Australian states. This has been determined through recent surveillance in citrus production areas.
- The Northern Territory and Western Australia have put in place movement controls and quarantine measures to contain the disease.
- Other jurisdictions have introduced domestic movement controls to prevent the entry of citrus canker hosts and carriers, plants and plant material, soil, equipment and machinery, from control areas in the NT and WA. However, stringent measures are in place to allow for the safe interstate trade of fruit.
- The NT's Department of Primary Industry and Resources is urging residents to report any citrus plants that they have purchased or received since January 2017, so they can be checked for signs of infection.
- The WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is urging residents in the state's north to report citrus plants of any age on their property so they can be checked.
- A nationally agreed response plan is in place, with technical advice being provided by the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP). The plan was endorsed by the National Management Group (NMG).

- Citrus Australia, and Nursery and Garden Industry Australia are represented in both the CCEPP and NMG.
- NMG agreed to a cost-shared budget of up to \$18.72 million to fund response activities until 31 December 2019. This budget includes costs for the initial Response Plan. The response is jointly funded by industry and government.
- The aim of the response plan is to eradicate citrus canker from Australia and reinstate country freedom status from the disease.
- Peak industry bodies are being provided with direct updates on the response to keep their members informed. Detailed information is also available at outbreak.gov.au.
- Citrus canker has previously been detected in Australia but has been eradicated in each instance. This current incident is not the re-emergence of citrus canker from a previous outbreak.

Progress of field activities

- Other states conducted surveillance and testing as a result of the tracing information they received from the NT. In total around 7,000 traces were investigated across Australia, and no citrus canker has been found.
- The premises surveyed include retail outlets, residential properties, and production nurseries. There are no traces to commercial citrus orchards, however, they have been inspected as a precaution.
- Western Australia has destroyed 1,520 host plants in Restricted Areas. This phase of the response is now complete but there will be ongoing surveillance in these areas to look for any disease recurrence.
- In the NT more than 12,000 host plants have been destroyed on infected properties. In addition, over 70 per cent of the plants identified for removal in restricted areas is complete.

About the Pest

Pest specific detail about Citrus canker is available on the industry Pest ID Tool available at <https://www.pestid.com.au/>.

