

Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Sugar Industry

Australia's geographic isolation and quarantine systems have meant that we have remained relatively free of many pests that cause significant issues for sugar production overseas. Freedom from exotic pests provides both a yield advantage and is a vital step for the future sustainability and viability of the industry.

Biosecurity planning provides a mechanism for the sugar industry, government and other relevant stakeholders to assess current biosecurity practices and future biosecurity needs. This is achieved through determining pests not currently present in Australia and analysing the risks they pose, as well identifying procedures that can be put in place to reduce the chance of pests reaching our borders and minimise the impact if a pest incursion occurs.

Plant Health Australia (PHA) works with the sugar industry, represented by CANEGROWERS and BSES Limited, and Government Members to identify, prioritise, and manage key plant health risks. An important step in this process is the development and implementation of the Sugar Industry Biosecurity Plan (IBP).

The Sugar IBP was first developed in 2004 and has been recently reviewed by PHA in collaboration with industry and government stakeholders.

The Industry Biosecurity Plan – an industry's blueprint

Industry Biosecurity Plans are an industry's blueprint for providing the best possible protection against exotic plant pests. IBPs cover:

- identification of the highest risk pests to the industry (threat identification and analysis)
- how an industry guards against exotic pests (risk mitigation activities)
- how an industry will know when an exotic pest has arrived (surveillance) and how to identify it (diagnostics)
- how an industry deals with exotic pests if they are found (contingency plans)

Development of an IBP involves significant consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. PHA would like to recognise all who have contributed financially and in-kind to the development of the Sugar IBP, including:

- BSES Limited
- CANEGROWERS
- Cane Productivity Services
- Australian Cane Farmers Federation
- Australian Sugar Milling Council
- The Australian Government and all state and territory governments

The Sugar IBP provides:

- a more rigorous basis for strategic planning, with a structured consideration of key risks
- assistance in setting priorities for further industry action and investment in biosecurity
- reduced costs, as a result of early detection and management of biosecurity risks
- effective and efficient biosecurity programs
- greater transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making and ongoing management processes
- optimisation of resources
- reduced loss and damage from pest incursions
- combined industry and government ownership of decisions, and a commitment to delivering real outcomes
- the capacity to examine arrangements for key pest threats across other plant industries affected

Identifying key pest threats for the sugar industry

The development of the Sugar IBP began with the production of Threat Summary Tables, which contain the pest threats identified for the sugar industry. Through expert consultation these pests were ranked for their potential threat based on entry, establishment, spread and economic criteria and, from this information, the high priority plant pest threats were determined. These high priority pest threats provide a focus for further risk mitigation activities such as surveillance, contingency planning, and on-farm biosecurity and awareness activities.

High priority plant pest threats for the sugar industry include:

Invertebrates	Pathogens
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canegrub• Sugarcane whitefly• Sugarcane woolly aphid• South African maize leafhopper• Sugarcane planthoppers• Pulvinaria scale• Sugarcane pyrilla• Sugarcane stem borer• Top shoot borer• Pink stem borer• Grey borer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brown spot• Downy mildew• Leaf scorch• Grassy shoot phytoplasma• White leaf phytoplasma• Sorghum mosaic virus, Sugarcane streak mosaic virus, exotic strains of Sugarcane mosaic virus• Ramu stunt

Implementation of the Industry Biosecurity Plan

The Sugar IBP provides a framework for the implementation of biosecurity risk mitigation measures in the industry. Through CANGROWERS and BSES Limited the sugar industry is implementing biosecurity preparedness through activities such as:

- development of pest-specific incursion management plans
- research into pest management strategies
- importing sugarcane varieties to increase diversity for disease resistance
- regular reviews of the sugar industry's biosecurity preparedness and key exotic pest threats
- training in recognising key pest threats

Want more info?

If you would like more information, or to download a copy of the Sugar IBP, visit www.planthealthaustralia.com.au, email admin@phau.com.au or phone (02) 6260 4322.