

# HOW DO YOU FIND OUT MORE ABOUT BUNCHY TOP?

We know that Bunchy Top exists in backyards and hobby plantations – the Project and the community have destroyed many thousands of infected plants in backyards

The Australian Government and the Australian banana industry are supporting this program and we have the world’s best scientists on our side helping to develop our strategies. But we can only be really effective with community support and action.

Current biosecurity laws place a great obligation on the community not to spread a pest or disease and that includes Banana Bunchy Top Virus.

Here are some ways you can help:

### Bunchy Top Hotline

If you have any doubts about your bananas, whatever variety you grow, please contact the BunchyTop Hotline: 1800 068 371

### Website

On our dedicated website page, Bunchy Top is explained and there are photos to help you identify the disease: [www.abgc.org.au/banana-bunchy-top](http://www.abgc.org.au/banana-bunchy-top)

### Bunchy Top Facebook and Instagram

Keep in touch with any workshop and find out more about the project through Facebook and Instagram– just search for Banana Bunchy Top Project .

### Community Workshops

Attend a workshop hosted by local garden clubs, councils or other interested groups. If you are a member of a club, a group or simply want to bring together your neighbours for a workshop contact us – [bunchytop@abgc.org.au](mailto:bunchytop@abgc.org.au) or phone 1800 068 371

# THE NATIONAL BUNCHY TOP PROJECT

Bunchy Top has been in Australia for over 100 years. While it has not been eradicated, we have been able to contain it and stop the spread to other regions, particularly the major growing area of far north Queensland.

For the past 10 years the National Bunchy Top Project has been working hard – and with success – to control this disease and to stop its spread.

Now into Phase 4, the National Bunchy Top Project is protecting commercial plantations and increasing grower and community involvement so everyone can have healthy bananas.

**A high priority is to stop the northwards movement of the Bunchy Top Virus beyond the northern boundary that is from Noosa to Cooroy. Preventing planting material from spreading to the major production areas in Far North Qld and Bundaberg is a high priority as the disease would have devastating consequences in this Bunchy Top free area.**



The National Bunchy Top Project is funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited using the banana industry levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. The project is supported by:



Queensland Government



Department of Primary Industries



# JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST

# BANANA BUNCHY TOP

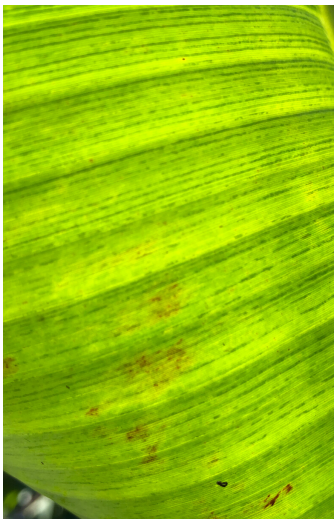
**Banana Bunchy Top Virus is the most devastating viral disease of bananas worldwide and all varieties are susceptible.**

**In Australia, it is only known to be present in South East Queensland up to the Sunshine Coast and on the Far North Coast of New South Wales.**

Not only does it pose a major threat to Australia’s commercial banana growers, but also it affects anyone wanting to grow healthy bananas.

So if you want healthy Aussie bananas, join us in the fight!

## WHAT DOES BANANA BUNCHY TOP LOOK LIKE?



1- A newly-emerged leaf, shown so that light is shining through from the other side. You can see dark dot-dash lines running from the midrib.



2- Black lines are visible in the mid-rib of the leaf.

In its early stages the symptoms are difficult for the untrained eye to see. The first symptom is short, dark dot-dash lines appearing along the veins of the youngest leaf starting from the mid-rib.

You can see these dot-dash lines best when you look upwards towards the sky through the underside of the youngest leaf.

When the disease is more advanced, each new leaf becomes shorter, narrower and stands more upright giving a 'bunched' leaf appearance – that's why it is called 'Bunchy Top'.

Plant growth is stunted and the leaves roll slightly upwards and tend to become yellow or lighter green.

Bunchy Top is difficult to identify in its early stages on any banana variety including Cavendish and Lady Finger, so if unsure contact the Bunchy Top team on 1800 068 371.

## HOW TO MANAGE BUNCHY TOP

There are three important steps, in THIS order:

1- Do NOT disturb the plant!

2 -Stop any infected aphid spread. Spray the whole plant (especially where the leaves emerge from the main trunk and around the base of the plant or clump) with SACOA Biopest Oil (certified for organic farming). This will kill any aphids.

3 - Kill the plant. The most effective and targeted way is by stem injecting with glyphosate (eg 'Round Up' or 'Zero'). Alternatively, you can cut the plant down, scoop out the middle of the stem or trunk and pour kerosene into the well. If chemicals are not used, then infected plants must be physically destroyed and that's hard work! (NOTE: If one stem is infected, the whole clump will be too, so it will need to be destroyed.)



Injecting glyphosate into the main stem of the plant will kill the plant.

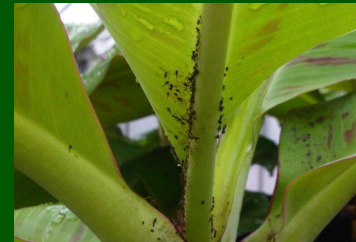
## HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Bunchy Top can only be spread in two ways:

1- By infected 'banana' aphids (see photo on right). Not all aphids are infected – they must feed on an infected plant for many hours first. But infected aphids can fly away and be carried many kilometres in the wind. That's why they must not be disturbed.

2- By infected planting material. Well-meaning people give away young plants or suckers to neighbours and friends – DON'T! This is illegal as infected material can unknowingly be spread.

If you are planting new bananas, make sure you get clean, disease free suckers or tissue culture plants.



Aphid congestion in the throat of the plant.



The exchange of infected plants.

## STILL NOT SURE? HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you would like an experienced opinion from our inspectors about your banana plants, please take a selection of photos to provide us with a good picture of the health of your plant/s. Essential are photos of:

- The whole plant showing all the leaves
- A close-up of the underside of a newly-emerged leaf, so that light is shining through from the other side (photo 1 far left)
- The mid-rib of the leaf (photo 2 far left)

Then email them to [bunchytop@abgc.org.au](mailto:bunchytop@abgc.org.au) so that an assessment can be made.

If they are clean, that's great. If they have Bunchy Top, then they must be destroyed.