

Notes from the Board

Two Panama TR4 Program Management Board (Board) meetings were held over November and December.

21 November

This 'out of session' meeting included a presentation of the Australian Banana Growers' Council's mandatory 'Code of Practice for the management and control of Panama TR4 on an infested property in Queensland' (the Code). The Code was officially endorsed by the Board and is now progressing to the Director General of the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries with industry's recommendation for the Code to be adopted into the Biosecurity Regulation 2016.

5 December

A number of items were discussed at December's meeting:

- The appointment of Tully Valley banana grower, Adrian Crema, as an ABGC representative on the Panama TR4 Program Management Board. Adrian brings a wealth of knowledge to the Board as a well respected and multi-generational grower. The Board acknowledged the contribution of Stephen Lowe who resigned from the Board in September.
- The ABGC will be commencing a 'pilot surveillance program' that will see a number of surveillance staff from the Panama TR4 Program being employed by ABGC to deliver surveillance prior to June 2023. This will ensure a smooth transition of surveillance activities on 1 July 2023 and continuity in the surveillance schedule for Far North Queensland growers.
- The challenges associated with transitioning a government-led disease management program to an industry body were noted by the Board. This was specifically in relation to the complexities of developing and processing comprehensive policies that underpin the transition process. The Board seeks exemptions to procedural requirements, where possible, so that transition can progress efficiently. With many high-level decisions still to be made over the next six months, sound decision making in a timely manner is considered the essence of success.

The Board first convened in April 2020 to formalise the joint industry and government partnership that has successfully managed Panama TR4 in Far North Queensland since 2015. The next Board meeting in January 2023 will mark only five months until disease management is handed over from government to industry in July 2023. This will be a historic moment for both the Queensland Government and the Australian banana industry, and will ensure Queensland's banana production will continue in the presence of Panama TR4.

**Next
meeting
23 Jan
2023**

General enquiries about this notice: Call Rhiannon Evans, Program Leader on 07 4091 8141 or Sonia Campbell, ABGC on 0428 038 330

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The Panama TR4 Program is a joint initiative between the Queensland Government and the Australian Banana Growers' Council.

**Panama
disease
tropical
race 4**

