

WHAT TO EXPECT

IF PANAMA TR4 IS DETECTED ON YOUR PROPERTY

This factsheet applies to anyone who occupies the land where an infected plant is detected. Individuals may be an owner or occupier of the land. For simplicity, this factsheet will refer to all individuals as a 'grower'.

When there is a detection of Panama TR4 on a new property, it can be a very challenging time for the grower involved. It's hard to know what to expect and what will be expected of you.

The below information aims to prepare growers for what will take place on their property when a plant showing symptoms of Panama TR4 is sampled and later confirmed to have the disease.

1

Surveillance by Grower Support (Biosecurity) team

Field Officers look for and identify plants that show external symptoms consistent with Panama TR4. When a plant shows symptoms, an officer will flag the plant and inform you. Best biosecurity practice would be for you to isolate the area. You are also welcome to contact the team if you find a suspect plant yourself.

Public inquiry through Biosecurity Queensland

A member of the public may report a suspect plant directly to Biosecurity Queensland.

2

Program officers assess and sample the symptomatic plant

Field Officers will establish a mutually convenient time for the plant to be examined internally, and sampled for laboratory diagnosis. This may occur while Field Officers are on site for regular surveillance. The plant will be marked and a sign placed on the plant to show that a sample has been taken.

Biosecurity Queensland officer assesses and samples the symptomatic plant

Biosecurity Queensland will arrange a time for the plant to be examined internally, and sampled for laboratory diagnosis. The plant will be marked and a sign will be placed on the plant to indicate that a sample has been taken.

3

Diagnostic testing takes place

There is a series of tests undertaken in the laboratory to determine the presence or absence of Panama TR4 in the plant sample. You will receive a letter with details of the sample and details of who you can contact if you have any questions or concerns. The Grower Support (Biosecurity) team notifies BQ when samples are taken under SLD. Similarly, BQ notifies the Grower Support (Biosecurity) team when a sample is taken under the Act.

4

The grower is informed of results and given a suspect property notice

You will be immediately contacted when the diagnostic test, polymerase chain reaction (PCR), returns a result (positive or negative). A positive PCR test indicates strong evidence of presence of the disease, however further diagnostic testing is needed to provide a conclusive result. This can take up to four weeks.

You will receive advice regarding the presence of Panama TR4, which places biosecurity requirements on the property. The team will continue to communicate and work with you while awaiting the vegetative compatibility group (VCG) diagnosis.

Best practice during this time is to limit the potential spread through:

- avoiding soil, plant material or any other risk item being moved off the property and
- ensuring staff and visitors have access to cleaning and disinfection equipment.

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5

Program activities commence on the suspect property

An ABGC Grower Support (Biosecurity) team member will provide biosecurity information and guidance and assist you in meeting requirements. Delimiting surveillance will be conducted by Field Officers to determine the extent of the disease on the property.

The Grower Support (Biosecurity) team will meet with you to:

- identify any links or risk pathways to or from other properties
- understand the operational activities of the property, both internal and external operations
- support you in understanding your requirements

Program officers may also need to assess operational activities unique to your property to determine the biosecurity risk and develop risk mitigation requirements where necessary.

6

The grower is informed of a positive VCG result and given an infested property notice

You will be informed when diagnostic testing, vegetative compatibility group (VCG), has returned a positive result to Panama TR4.

The aim herein is to contain the disease and protect the broader industry from the spread of Panama TR4. This is done by restricting soil and plant material from leaving the infected property and managing any areas of infestation via use of biosecurity measures.

Any information we share with you will be tailored to your property and based on everything we've learned about how your farm operates. We're here to support you with practical, relevant advice that works for your situation while meeting your General Biosecurity Obligations (GBO).

Confirmed detections are managed collaboratively between the Grower Support (Biosecurity) Team and Biosecurity Queensland (BQ).

7

Destruction of plants begins

Destruction of banana plants around and including the infected plant is required as prescribed by the Queensland Biosecurity Manual. Program officers will guide you or your staff on the destruction process and a destruction zone will be established.



If Panama TR4 moves outside the Tully Valley

In addition to the above steps, if the disease moves outside the Tully Valley (where it is currently known to be), ABGC will:

- Treat the detection as a 'new incursion' for preparedness, surveillance and response planning purposes
- Work with the grower to determine any possible linkages with other businesses or properties
- Keep industry informed while protecting grower privacy
- Prioritise early containment and reduce spread from that farm

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