



20 August 2013

Local vets and rangers prepare for frontline Local Land Services plant disease response

Local Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) rangers and vets will prepare to be on the Local Land Services frontline against exotic plant pests and disease at a one-day workshop in Yanco tomorrow, 21 August.

About 30 will spend the day at Yanco Agricultural Institute for their first plant biosecurity workshop to discuss how they'll work to stop the spread of emergency plant pests and diseases - like potato cyst nematode and devastating stem rust strains - into New South Wales.

The workshop is part of the biosecurity effort aimed at improving the capacity of Local Land Services organisations across the State to respond to plant pests and disease outbreaks. Rangers and vets from the Hume, Riverina and Lachlan regions will attend.

LHPA Ranger from the Riverina region, Scott Watkins, will be one of the rangers attending.

"This workshop will help us identify specific plant pests better. It will also help us help landholders to identify emerging issues before they become a problem," Mr Watkins said.

Acting Executive Director Biosecurity NSW, Department of Primary Industries, Barry Kay, said the one day workshop will cover emergency plant pest and disease incursions and response, and will use a real life scenario to prepare attendees.

"We don't want to wait for an emergency to happen - early detection is key to effective responses.

"The workshop at Yanco is the first in a number of training workshops to be rolled out to equip Local Land Services with early detection, prevention and preparedness strategies that are critical to biosecurity," Mr Kay said.

New exotic plant pests that threaten NSW's \$12 billion primary industries sector have been added to the State's 'most wanted list' of notifiable pests and diseases.

Plant biosecurity is all about protecting the economy and the environment from problems associated with pests and diseases of plants.

All unusual diseases and pests should be reported to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

More information on plant diseases and pests is available at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity

For more information on *Local Land Services* visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

***** EDITOR'S NOTE *****

Media are invited to attend the workshop. Interview and photography opportunities will be available from 9:30am. Yanco Agricultural Institute is on the Narrandera Road, Yanco.

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