

BIOSECURITY ACT 2015

Discussion Paper: Citrus Red Mite

December 2015



Photo: © NSW Department of Primary Industries

Comments on this Paper close on 12 February 2016

Email your comments to: submissions.biosecuritylegislation@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Post your comments to: Biosecurity Act 2015
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For more information

See: www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact

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Summary

The *Biosecurity Act 2015* (Biosecurity Act) will repeal the *Plant Diseases Act 1924*, which currently provides the regulatory controls and powers for managing the risks posed by citrus red mite (CRM).

Having considered existing management arrangements and risks associated with the pest, it is proposed to manage CRM by way of the **General Biosecurity Duty (GBD)**. Biosecurity Certification (including Certification Assurance arrangements) will continue be available to provide market access for citrus nursery stock.

Background

What is the problem?

New South Wales is the only jurisdiction in Australia where CRM is known to be present. Based on historic survey data, CRM was delimited to the counties of Cumberland and Northumberland. Current surveillance information is based on nil reports of occurrence of CRM from production areas outside of the known distribution.

Why is it important?

New South Wales citrus production is worth over \$160 million a year¹. In 2014, NSW growers produced over 170,000 tonnes of oranges alone, which is approximately half of the total production for the whole of Australia². Citrus is also an important product for export markets with NSW citrus exports valued at over \$20 million a year³.

What is the outcome we are seeking?

The desired outcome is to ensure market access by preventing, controlling and managing negative impacts of pests and diseases on citrus production in NSW.

Current management arrangements

The *Plant Diseases (Citrus Red Mite) Notification 2014*, under the *Plant Diseases Act 1924*, declares the counties of Cumberland and Northumberland in NSW to be a quarantine area (known as the 'Citrus Quarantine Area') on account of CRM. The notification restricts the movement of CRM host plants out of the quarantine area to prevent CRM from spreading to other citrus production areas.

The Certification Assurance arrangement (*CA-16 Treatment of Citrus, Fortunella or Poncirus for Citrus Red Mite*) allows for businesses to self-certify host plant material before movement within NSW. Plant Health Certificates can be provided, on a fee for service basis.

Proposed Management under the NSW Biosecurity Act

The **General Biosecurity Duty (GBD)** is being proposed to manage CRM. The GBD provides that any person who deals with biosecurity matter (e.g., CRM) or a carrier (e.g., a citrus plant), and who knows (or ought reasonably to know) of the biosecurity risk posed (or likely to be posed), has a biosecurity duty to ensure that the risk is prevented, eliminated or minimised - so far as is reasonably practicable.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue number 75030: Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia 2013-14

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue number ABS 71210: Agricultural Commodities Australia 2013-14

³ Australian Bureau of Statistics, NSW agricultural exports 2013-14

For example, the owner of a commercial citrus plant nursery or commercial citrus operation ought to know of the risks associated with CRM. If that person identifies a CRM infestation he or she should not sell or move the infested plant material from their property and should take any other reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the infestation.

How you can discharge your GBD may be outlined in Industry Standards, Codes of Practice, guidelines or through other advisory or education material. For example, the 'Biosecurity Manual for Citrus Producers', would be available to industry and the general public in relation to how they can discharge their GBD.

The Biosecurity Act includes various offences for failing to discharge the GBD.

The Biosecurity Act also includes provisions for Biosecurity Certification and industry self-certification arrangements. Therefore, **Biosecurity Certificates** and **Certification Assurance arrangements** would continue to be available to provide for the movement of host plant material interstate and within NSW. The widespread use by all growers of certified pest and disease free citrus nursery stock will minimise the risks associated with the movement of plant material and the potential spread of all pests and diseases which impact on citrus.

Authorised officers have powers under the Biosecurity Act to respond to circumstances where CRM is generating a biosecurity risk. For example, issuing a biosecurity direction or seizing infested plant material.

What do you think?

We value your comments on how we can improve our biosecurity system and look forward to receiving your input into this important process.

Please complete the following survey on 'Citrus Red Mite' at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/citrusredmite>.

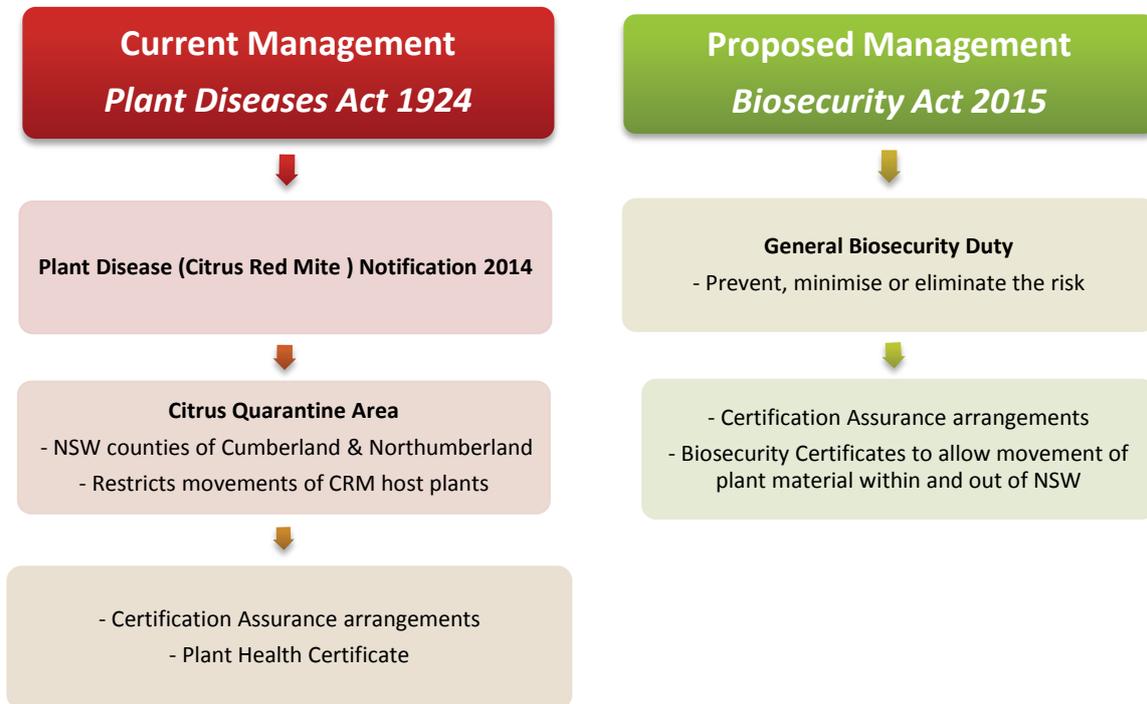
Alternatively, submit your feedback **by Friday, 12 February 2016** via [email](#) or post to:

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For more information about the *Biosecurity Act 2015* and regulatory framework, please visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurityact.

Appendix 1

Summary of current and proposed management of CRM



Appendix 2

