Australia’s Grains Farm Biosecurity Program – a national initiative in plant biosecurity awareness, education and training

Rachel Taylor-Hukins
Australia’s ‘flagship’ extension focused program for promoting farm biosecurity

- Initiated in 2007
- Funded by Grain Producers Australia + State Government agencies
- Managed by Plant Health Australia

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What are our aims and how do we achieve these?

Contribute to the grains industry’s risk mitigation activities, and promote a shared responsibility involving government, industry and community

- Build capacity and capability in the grains industry
- Support market access and early detection through High Priority Pest surveillance
- Improve preparedness for emergency plant pest incursions
Key outcomes

Increase awareness of:
- priority pests
- risks and mitigation strategies

- Priority pests – awareness of key features + encouragement to report “unusual” pests

- Risks and mitigation strategies – farm biosecurity:
  - Link between government and industry – aim to take the jargon out of biosecurity and put into practical terms and strategies for growers and other stakeholders
  - Farm biosecurity = good farming practices
Key outcomes

Development of practical resources and training materials

- Fact sheets
- Biosecurity manual for grain producers
- Farm biosecurity planning + templates
- Awareness posters – “stored grains least wanted”
- Integration into current resources e.g. GRDC “ute guides”
Key outcomes

Utilising media and stakeholder engagement activities

- Media releases, grower group newsletters, GRDC Groundcover articles
- Major field days
- Industry events – GRDC updates, conferences, on-farm field days, grower group events
- Farm biosecurity gate signs
Key outcomes

Building collaborative networks and alliances across all of industry:

TRAINING

- Farm biosecurity planning
- Pulse Australia Best Management Practice accreditation workshops
- GRDC stored grain workshops
- Invertebrate + pathogen ID courses
- VET + University modules
- Landcare + catchment groups
- Grower groups
- Researchers + trial operators
- Agronomists
- Extension staff within own Gov
Building collaborative networks and alliances across all of industry: 

**SURVEILLANCE**

- Voluntary
- Collaborating with agronomists, bulk handlers, researchers, trial operators, diagnostic labs, seed companies
- Approx 100 general surv. programs
- Silo surveillance program – novel approach to on farm engagement and surveillance for khapra beetle
Key outcomes

Promotion of industry advocates
&
Emergency responses + preparedness
Evaluation undertaken throughout the program indicates an increased awareness of biosecurity risks and voluntary adoption of biosecurity practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep records</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor stored products</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean machinery/equipment coming on property</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control visitor movement on property</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report anything unusual</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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Looking to the future

The nature of the grains industry: non perishable, bulk product & flexibility (annual cropping)

Drivers:
- State legislation
- Market drivers
- Incursions
- Biosecurity in other industries e.g. new LPA requirements, cotton myBMP
The GFBP is Australia’s flagship program for promoting farm biosecurity, with its success encouraging other industries to implement similar extension programs. The focus on biosecurity best practice through industry engagement has seen the GFBP contribute to safeguarding grains production and maintaining Australia’s grain export reputation.

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