

# Potato cyst nematode at Thorpdale

## Interstate trade negotiations

- An interstate meeting of plant health managers was held on 22 October to discuss the implications of the Thorpdale detection.
- DPI presented background on the detection, what it could mean for the district and the industry, and a possible minimal control area.
- The other states need to consult with their respective potato industries before deciding on their market access requirements.
- DPI requested that all states use the national PCN risk management plan to guide them in deciding on their market access requirements for Victorian potatoes.
- The other states agreed to follow up on potato consignments traced forward from infested land and survey for the presence of PCN.
- South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland are now all linked to infested land and their freedom from PCN will need to be proved through soil surveys.
- An agreed national diagnostic protocol and sampling method also needs to be finalised.

## Soil surveys

- Four teams are being employed to conduct soil surveys. They will be trained in hygiene and other procedures and be ready to start next week.
- Surveys will be conducted according to a priority list ie.
  1. The affected property;
  2. Land linked with that property ie. adjoining land, land worked with the same machinery and land on which seed from the infested property has been grown;
  3. District surveys to find the extent of PCN spread;
  4. High-intensity market access surveys.

## Trace forwards

- With the cooperation of the owners, DPI is following the distribution trails of potatoes grown in the affected paddock, to help assess the possible spread of PCN.

## Management team

- Despite other current pest issues such as locusts and fruit fly, DPI has set up a large team to manage the response to the PCN detection.
- The response is based at DPI Knoxfield, with 'forward posts' at DPI Ellinbank and the Baw Baw Shire offices in Trafalgar.
- Facilities at DPI Knoxfield will be scaled up to handle the large number of soil samples which will need to be tested in the coming months.

## Minister to visit Thorpdale

- Minister for Agriculture Joe Helper will visit Thorpdale on Friday 24 October to discuss the situation with industry representatives, local growers and merchants, and the community.

## Communication

- These updates will be distributed weekly and will be posted on the DPI website (see below).
- DPI is in frequent contact with industry representatives.
- Information on farm hygiene protocols will be distributed in the near future.

## Acknowledgements

- DPI would like to acknowledge the support of ViCSPA, Seed Potatoes Victoria, the Victorian Potato Growers' Council and the Baw Baw Shire Council in the response to the PCN detection.

For information about the movement of potato plant material, machinery and other equipment, please contact DPI Plant Standards on (03) 8371 3500 or [plant.standards@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:plant.standards@dpi.vic.gov.au)

Other information is available on the DPI website at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/psb](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/psb)