

19 February 2018

Assessment of the effectiveness of biosecurity measures to manage the risks of brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) entering Australia

Cotton Australia is the key representative body for Australia's cotton growing industry supporting more than 1200 cotton producers. The cotton industry is an integral part of the Australian economy, worth more than \$2 billion per-annum in export earnings and helping to underpin more than 50 rural communities.

Cotton Australia holds the official role for biosecurity stewardship in the Australian cotton industry, and works with the Australian government to manage this national priority through its membership of [Plant Health Australia](#). Cotton Australia recognises the need for the cotton industry to work with the federal, state and territory governments to help reduce the potential for incursions of emergency plant pests that could adversely impact on production, domestic and international trade and the regional economy and environment. The cotton industry is committed to ensuring effective responses to pest incursions are possible to minimise costs.

Cotton Australia welcomes the opportunity to put forward a submission on the assessment of the effectiveness of biosecurity measures to manage the risks of brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) entering Australia on behalf of its members.

Cotton Australia acknowledges that the higher rate of detections of BMSB at importation sites has come with a high cost for industry in control of the pest and substantial disruption of trade. However, the DAWR draft pest risk analysis for BMSB (August 2017) indicates that the overall likelihood for the entry, establishment and spread of BMSB in Australia is estimated to be high from at risk goods. The cost to the agricultural industry would be significant if BMSB were to become established. As such, Cotton Australia is supportive of efforts to eradicate this pest at detection, provided a cost effective response is achievable.

It should be noted that overall, the economic impacts of BMSB for the Australian cotton industry are considered to be low as:

1. Cotton does not appear to be a primary host for BMSB internationally.

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2. Significant economic impacts have not been incurred by BMSB damage to cotton internationally.
3. It is likely that pest management strategies for sucking pests such as *N. viridula* would provide incidental control for BMSB in Australian cotton crops.
4. BMSB is unlikely to cause any significant trade or marketability issues for Australian cotton.

The increased rate of detection during the current BMSB season suggests the need to better manage the risk off shore. This would reduce the pressure on on-shore detection and follow up surveillance and management. As BMSB is a hitchhiker pest, a coordinated effort involving all government, industry and community stakeholders is required, as is currently occurring.

Cotton Australia is supportive of the engagement and consultation with industry regarding detections, control measures and circulation of talking points of BMSB. As a potential affected industry, it is a priority to be aware of any biosecurity threats to the industry. The communication and engagement to industry has been sufficient to ensure affected parties are well informed.

Cotton Australia views biosecurity as a key priority for the industry and would welcome an opportunity to provide further information on its position. For more information, contact Sally Ceeney, Research Direction and Stewardship Policy Officer, sallyc@cotton.org.au 0459 189 771.

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