

Andrew Ricketts

12th October 2017

Sessional Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Hobart

By email to: brt@parliament.tas.gov.au

Blueberry Rust in Tasmania Inquiry

Dear Honourable Members

Thank you for this important inquiry.

I am currently interstate visiting family, relatives and friends. Thus, I seek your understanding that this submission is both brief and purely preliminary in nature. NB this submission is emailed from my brother's email.

I would very much appreciate the opportunity, please, to expand on this submission after my return in late October and would also welcome an opportunity to present further information to a Committee hearing into the Rust fiasco.

I am a stakeholder over Blueberry issues. I collect and grow blueberry germplasm. I am an organic grower. I am not represented or indeed am a member of any grower organisation.

I have an ongoing relationship with Biosecurity Tasmania, and have been inspected a couple of times regarding both outbreaks of Blueberry rust.

I believe in strong biosecurity for Tasmania. I have good reasons and consider it essential for Tasmania to move as soon as possible to better biosecurity.

Tasmania needs better processes and higher biosecurity protocols and standards. The current approach should be scrapped. Tighter controls are essential.

Blueberry Rust should be eradicated now. It is that simple.

Laws and approach to biosecurity need an overhaul urgently.
Border quarantine needs significant improvement.

A culture of openness needs to be established in Biosecurity Tasmania.

If this Inquiry does not unearth the various reports and information I will pursue it in other ways. I would prefer however to not have to do so.

I seek under this Inquiry a comprehensive investigation into both rust incursions to establish all the facts regarding all aspects of both rust incursions please.

Please establish whether there is any relationship between the two incursions. Please establish the reasons for all the decisions, which were made by Biosecurity Tasmania.

Please seek solutions for the secrecy and unhelpful approach of Biosecurity Tasmania.

Please establish the date when the decision not to eradicate was made and the timing of events around what I call the rust abrogation pathway. I wish to see the whole sorry saga on the public record.

Blueberry rust in Tasmania is undesirable and will be harmful to businesses within Tasmania. The handling of rust has been unsatisfactory. My correspondence with Biosecurity Tasmania remains unanswered. Not good enough.

I maintain very high standards of biosecurity on my property. Why should I have them (Biosecurity Tasmania) back?

I look forward to hearing from you and indeed hope you will hold a hearing in Northern Tasmania please. The Rust is in Northern Tasmania.

Sincerely
(signed)
Andrew Ricketts