



## Inquiry into Blueberry Rust in Tasmania

Submission 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017

PIBAA  
1 Cambridge Road  
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Tasmania 7018

## **Inquiry into Blueberry Rust in Tasmania**

Ms Natasha Exel  
Inquiry Secretary  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
HOBART TAS 7000

Dear Ms Exel

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, on behalf of the Primary Industry Biosecurity Action Alliance (PIBAA), in relation to this inquiry.

PIBAA represents a diverse group of primary producers from agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, nursery and horticulture. Although issues of interest within biosecurity and quarantine are varied the key concerns for the group remain focussed on ensuring there is a continued commitment to maintaining and strengthening biosecurity to protect primary industries and Tasmania's economy.

The significance of strong biosecurity to Tasmania is fundamental to the long-term strategies of this state. The primary industry sector is aligned with the future vision of the state being a producer of premium, high-quality product for national and international markets – this cannot be attained if the biosecurity in the state is not given the highest priority.

Yours sincerely



Dixie Emmerton

On behalf of the Primary Industry Biosecurity Action Alliance (PIBAA)

## **1. Terms of Reference:**

PIBAA note the following Terms of Reference have been put forward and consider that a number of our member associations have the necessary knowledge and expertise to offer comments in relation to specific Blueberry Rust matters outlined in points 1, 2 and 3.

PIBAA does however want to offer comment in relation to the management of Biosecurity within Tasmania and other matters which appear relevant to points 4 and 5 below:

1. The actions taken by Biosecurity Tasmania to address the 2014 and 2016 outbreaks of blueberry rust;
2. Past and present regulatory requirements relating to the blueberry industry in Tasmania;
3. The future of Tasmania's blueberry industry, including the impacts of previous, current and any future outbreaks of blueberry rust;
4. The capacity of Biosecurity Tasmania to manage blueberry rust outbreaks and other risks into the future; and
5. Any other matter incidental thereto.

## **2. Background**

PIBAA recognises that Tasmania as a state of regional biosecurity differentiation: our unique pest and disease status should be recognised and maintained to ensure that pest and disease incursions do not threaten the long-term viability of primary industry in Tasmania.

As Tasmania is heavily reliant on primary industries the consequences of an exotic pest incursion would, in our opinion, have a far greater effect on our economy than in most other states.

Our area freedom from certain pests and diseases has many advantages for Tasmania including:

- Increased market access in overseas markets
- Reduced chemical usage and production costs
- Reduced health and safety risk due to reduced chemical usage
- Brand enhancement for the "clean and green" image
- Downstream branding – hospitality and tourism.

### **3. Responses to the Inquiry**

- A. PIBAA want to ensure that Biosecurity Tasmania has the capacity to assess and deal with any biosecurity matters taking into account sound scientific evidence.
- B. PIBAA encourages Biosecurity Tasmania to adopt a partnership approach with industry in regard to biosecurity matters so that regulation is developed and implemented in a collaborative way which supports industry in a timely and sustainable manner.
- C. PIBAA want to ensure that Biosecurity Tasmania has the capacity to assess and deal with any biosecurity matters in a consultative manner where all communication is proactive, effective and timely.
- D. PIBAA want to ensure that Biosecurity Tasmania consults widely and takes into account stakeholder concerns when drafting relevant legislation including the regulations.

PIBAA would like to thank the Legislative Council for the opportunity to provide a submission in relation to this inquiry.



Dixie Emmerton  
Chair  
Primary Industry Biosecurity Action Alliance (PIBAA)