



biosecurity and on-farm research:

Starting the on-farm biosecurity conversation

The introduction of an exotic pest as well as the spread of endemic pests and diseases can affect everyone: growers, agronomists, industry and the local community. With biosecurity being a shared responsibility, it is important that researchers, extension officers and industry members take an active and key role in helping progress on-farm biosecurity conversations with growers as part of managing biosecurity risks.

Field work, on-farm research trials and field days are an important contribution to the cotton industry; however these activities can be associated with a number of biosecurity risks. Initiating on-farm biosecurity conversations with participating growers can help you to minimise the likelihood of spreading pests, weeds and diseases.

What questions should you be asking growers or farm managers?

1. Do you have any biosecurity expectations or protocols in place on-farm?
2. Does the farm have a wash down facility that I can access?
3. Do you require a text or call when the research team would like to visit the farm to conduct trial work?
4. Do you have a visitor register in the shed to sign when on farm, or a printed visitor register to fill out throughout the season and hand back at the conclusion of the research trials?
5. Are there any pests, pathogens or other issues on the farm that may require extra vigilance to ensure they don't spread?
6. Would you prefer a farm vehicle being used on farm, with the research vehicle being parked away from production areas?

Even if the grower or farm manager says not to worry, you still have a responsibility to manage your biosecurity risks when conducting on-farm research. Make sure you, your vehicle and equipment are free of pests before going on farm.



Remember if you come across any unusual pests or symptoms during your research or get asked to look at pests or symptoms that you cannot identify by a grower or agronomist – REPORT IT! It is important to report any unusual pests or symptoms as soon as possible. A delay in identifying or reporting an exotic pest could result in a lost opportunity for an effective containment and eradication response. If you do not know what the pest or symptom is, before doing further investigations yourself, it is crucial under biosecurity requirements that the pest is formally reported by calling the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline – 1800 084 881.

All calls to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline will be transferred to the relevant state department where you will be asked questions about what you have seen. The state department can help connect you with the appropriate expert for identification or help you get additional information. There are no consequences for 'false' reports.

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