

# NSW Cut Flower Industry

## Cut Flower Biosecurity 101

### Purpose

Biosecurity in the cut flower industry is essential to protect crops from pests, diseases, and weeds that could threaten the quality and sustainability of production. Implementing biosecurity measures is not just a responsibility but a proactive step to ensure the longevity and profitability of your business. By adopting simple, effective practices, you can safeguard your crops, maintain market access, and contribute to the overall health of the industry.



### Six essential steps for biosecurity

#### 1. Stay informed about biosecurity threats

- Familiarise yourself and your team with the most significant exotic pests threatening the cut flower industry.
- Conduct regular biosecurity training sessions to reinforce hygiene practices for people, equipment, and vehicles.
- Be vigilant in monitoring for new pests and unusual symptoms on crops. Record your observations meticulously to reduce the risk of pest establishment and to maintain market access.

#### 2. Source clean, pest-free inputs

- Only purchase growing media, fertilisers, and propagation material from reputable suppliers, preferably those who are accredited with a quality assurance scheme such as the Nursery Industry Accreditation Scheme Australia (NIASA) or BioSecure HACCP certification.
- Ensure all propagation material and farm inputs are clean and tested. Record the source, testing, and treatments applied, along with the planting locations on your property.
- Dispose of farm waste properly, away from production areas, to minimise the risk of contamination.

### → Key Messages

#### ● STAY VIGILANT:

Prevention is better than cure. Ensure everyone on your team understands the importance of biosecurity and knows the potential threats.

#### ● A BIOSECURITY PLAN:

Develop and implement a biosecurity plan tailored to your cut flower production.

#### ● INVEST IN CLEAN INPUTS:

Start strong by using only clean, pest-free inputs. Choosing reputable suppliers ensures that your flowers begin with the best chance for success.

#### ● PRIORITISE HYGIENE:

Good sanitation practices are essential. Regularly clean tools, equipment, and vehicles to prevent the spread of pests across your property.

#### ● MONITOR REGULARLY:

Keep a close eye on your crops. Regular inspections allow for early detection of any potential issues, helping you address them before they escalate.

#### ● ACT FAST:

If you notice something unusual, don't hesitate. Quick reporting and action can prevent a small problem from becoming a major issue.

#### ● EMBRACE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION:

Biosecurity is a community effort. Working together with neighbouring farms strengthens regional defences against pest threats.

### 3. Maintain a clean growing environment

- Practice good sanitation and hygiene to prevent pests from entering and spreading on your property.
- Ensure all workers, visitors, vehicles, and equipment are clean before they enter or leave your property. Provide a wash-down facility on-site, or identify an available facility in your area.
- Establish a designated visitor area and provide disinfection facilities (like the boot wash shown in Figure 1). Place biosecurity signs at farm entrances (Figure 2) and use a visitor register to track movements.



Figure 1. Boot Wash Station

(Image: <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/protecting-victoria/victorian-viticulture-biosecurity/best-practice-viticulture-biosecurity>)



Figure 2. Biosecurity sign

### 4. Monitor your crops regularly

- Frequently inspect your crops and raw materials to identify any unusual signs of pests or diseases.
- Keep detailed records, including photographs, of any suspicious observations. Constant vigilance is vital for early detection of any exotic plant pest threats.

### 5. Comply with legal requirements

- Understand and adhere to all laws and regulations designed to protect the cut flower industry and Australian agriculture.
- Stay updated on changes to biosecurity legislation to ensure ongoing compliance.

### 6. Report unusual observations immediately

- If you suspect a new pest or disease, report it immediately.
- Contact the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline at 1800 084 881 for assistance.
- Restrict movement in the affected area, and ensure proper decontamination of anyone or anything that has come into contact with the suspected pest.

**If you see anything unusual,  
call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline**

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE  
1800 084 881**

More information, tools and videos on biosecurity can be found at the [Farm Biosecurity](https://www.farmbiosecurity.com.au) website or at the [Plant Health Australia](https://www.planthealthaustralia.gov.au) website.

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