July 2025

# National Policy on Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests

# Frequently Asked Questions

***What is a regulated non-quarantine pest (RNQP)?***

* A regulated non-quarantine pest (RNQP) is a pest that is present in a country but is regulated because it affects the intended use of plants—usually in commercial production—causing unacceptable economic impact.
* Unlike quarantine pests, RNQPs are not subject to exclusion from the country, but their presence is controlled through official measures to reduce their impact. These measures may include certification schemes, pest management practices, or restrictions on the movement of affected plant material.

***What criteria must a pest meet to be recognised as an RNQP?***

* The pest is a non-quarantine pest, i.e. it is already present and may be widespread in Australia.
* The pest’s presence in specific plants and plant products affects their use and causes economic losses.
* There are effective measures to suppress the pest in those specific plants and plant products.

***What is the purpose of the National Policy on Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests (the policy)?***

* The policy enables the Australian Government to regulate RNQPs at the international border to minimise damage to domestic plant industries.
* Australia, as a signatory member to the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), must adhere to rules and expectations set by the IPPC for all its members. This includes declaring to the IPPC the plant pests that Australia regulates at its international border.
* Australia currently does not have a policy framework for regulating RNQPs. It is important that we have an agreed set of requirements that align with the International Standards on Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) for regulating RNQPs.
* The policy outlines key responsibilities of the Australian Government, state and territory governments and industry in regulating RNQPs. These responsibilities are consistent with the shared biosecurity culture in which Australia operates in.

***Why am I being asked to provide feedback on the policy?***

* We invite you to provide feedback on the RNQP policy because it may impact your industry or business activities.
* We want to ensure that the RNQP policy provides a clear framework for the implementation of RNQP programs and that the requirements are achievable while meeting international standards.
* Industry is a key stakeholder and must comply with relevant government frameworks for the Australian Government and state and territory governments to authorise RNQP programs and justify international border regulation for RNQPs.

***How will my feedback impact the policy?***

* Your feedback will be considered and may be used to refine the policy before the policy is finalised. We can only consider feedback that aligns with our responsibilities under the [ISPMs](https://www.ippc.int/en/core-activities/standards-setting/ispms/) and [Inter-Governmental Agreement on Biosecurity](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity-trade/policy/partnerships/nbc/intergovernmental-agreement-on-biosecurity).

***How was the policy developed and who is responsible for endorsing the policy?***

* The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (the department) drafted the policy with input from state and territory governments.
* The department consulted and obtained approval of the current consultation draft through the [Plant Health Committee (PHC)](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/agriculture-land/plant/health/committees/phc). PHC members include the Chief Plant Health Managers (or equivalent) in each state and territory and the Australian Chief Plant Protection Officer.
* PHC is responsible for endorsing policy.

***How will the policy be implemented?***

* The policy takes effect after PHC endorses it. Growers and industry stakeholders are expected to follow the requirements and processes described in the policy and supporting documentation (see FAQ below) for a pest to be recognised as an RNQP.
* Growers and industry are expected to work with state and territory governments in meeting RNQP requirements before the department can regulate the RNQP at the international border.

***What is NOT in the policy?***

* The policy does not contain specific requirements for individual pest/host scenarios.
* The policy does not contain operational details on how to implement RNQP programs.
* The policy does not contain information on other pest regulatory systems such as official control programs for quarantine pests or pest free area programs.

***Is there supporting documentation for the policy?***

* Yes. The *RNQP Application Guidelines* contains further information to support an RNQP application.
* This document contains operational details that are mostly for government use. It is not open for consultation but can be shared with individual industries as they seek recognition of RNQP programs. This presents an opportunity to get ongoing feedback that we can consider for future updates.

***How will RNQP applications be assessed?***

* The department will assess RNQP applications submitted by state and territory governments and industries against the requirements in the policy.
* Should the proposed RNQP program meet the requirements, the application will be approved.
* If the application does not contain enough information, or the control measures proposed be considered insufficient, the department will work with state and territory governments and industries to improve the application.

**Submit your feedback**

We welcome your feedback on the policy. Your feedback will shape our understanding of industry needs and challenges, ensuring the policy is relevant, effective and practical to implement.

We welcome feedback on the policy or issues raised by the FAQ document but particularly encourage responses on:

* How clear was the information presented in the policy on implementing an RNQP program. Are there features we haven’t captured that you believe would be useful to include in the policy?
* Do you believe the policy provides clear guidance for implementing RNQP programs?
* How relevant is the policy to your industry or interests?
* Are there any areas of concern or suggestions for improvement?
* What challenges do you foresee in implementing this policy?

**Have your say**

* We encourage stakeholders to contribute to the discussion through the Have Your Say survey which is now live.
* We also welcome respondents to provide general comments or perspectives.
* The survey closes on Monday 1 September 2025.

Join the conversation. Go to https://haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au

**Next steps**

The department will consider all feedback. Your responses and ideas will help identify ways to improve the policy. The department will publish a summary of the feedback from the survey once consultation closes.

Once the department has consolidated changes to the policy, it will be submitted to PHC for final endorsement. The endorsed policy will be published on department’s website.

**Contacts**

For further information about the *National Policy on* *Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests* email [nationalpestpolicy@aff.gov.au](mailto:nationalpestpolicy@aff.gov.au).