

23 May 2019

Guy Barnett MP

Minister for Primary Industries and Water

2019-20 Budget: Taking biosecurity to the next level to protect and grow our primary industries

The 2019-20 State Budget significantly strengthens Tasmania's biosecurity systems to keep pests out of Tasmania and protect our vital primary industries, environment and the tourism sectors.

Tasmania's trade and tourism boom brings new challenges for our island's biosecurity and this year's budget confirms a \$30.36 million investment into Biosecurity Tasmania.

This year's budget is about maintaining the momentum and investing for growth, and features an additional \$2.6 million per year for a securing our borders initiative to further boost frontline biosecurity to keep Tasmania free from fruit fly, other pests and disease and to maintain access to premium markets. This includes:

- More biosecurity inspectors doing more inspections of high risk produce and imported freight and goods;
- Improved biosecurity preparedness and emergency response capacity through biosecurity education, training and support programs. Building on existing partnerships with the TFGA and Fruit Growers Tasmania, the next focus is working with key industries such as wine and plant nurseries;
- A new tourism biosecurity program to engage with the tourism industry and visitors about the vital importance of biosecurity to Tasmania;
- Further improving signage and reviewing our compliance measures at airports and ports; and
- New electronic import traceability and verification systems for more efficient biosecurity inspection administration and market reporting.

This additional investment will be supported by changes to the partial cost recovery of inspection service fees from 2019-20 onwards. The fees will remain below full cost recovery for the service with the Tasmanian Government continuing to fund the balance of the cost.

This boost to biosecurity coverage addresses the potential risks of imported produce, freight and goods bringing pests and diseases to the State and further information will be outlined in a Regulatory Impact Statement soon to be released for community and industry consultation.

MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM INVESTING FOR GROWTH

Tasmania is reliant on a rigorous and effective biosecurity system to protect our annual \$2.4 billion agri-food production, our \$3 billion in exports and our \$3.03 billion tourism industry.

Since 2014 we have consistently delivered additional funding for biosecurity and we are ensuring our frontline biosecurity continues to respond to the risks and changing demands.

The budget also confirms the ongoing delivering of initiatives commenced in the 2018-19 budget including:

- Truck and machinery wash down stations;
- working with industry to address risks and on-farm hygiene strategies;
- biosecurity officers on the Bass Strait islands; and
- additional inspectors, a Specialist Fruit Fly Adviser and an Industry Collaboration Manager in Biosecurity Tasmania.

As our economy continues to grow, the Budget supports and encourages growth that benefits all Tasmanians and these investments in the critical biosecurity of our island state are an important part of supporting that growth.

Contact: Ben Davidson

Phone: 0418 301 051