

Background Information: Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture National Biosecurity Reference Document (Standard)

July 28, 2015 to October 16, 2015

What is the National Voluntary Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture Sectors?

It is recognized that *many* Canadian greenhouse, nursery and floriculture producers implement excellent biosecurity programs to mitigate pests. The objective of the standard is to provide *all* producers with a nationally consistent proactive approach to prevent the introduction and spread of pests through implementation of biosecurity measures. A nationally consistent approach to preventing and managing pests is important for Canadian producers to maintain and access new domestic and international markets. The voluntary greenhouse, nursery and floriculture biosecurity standard is a reference document to assist producers in the development of biosecurity plans for their farms which supports the following:

- provide guidelines for biosecurity;
- promote a nationally consistent approach for managing risks of plant pests; and
- help to identify gaps in current biosecurity plans.

The *National Voluntary Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture Sectors* identifies key risks, target outcomes (biosecurity goals) and considerations based on pest introduction and transmission pathways. The intent is not to prescribe but rather to provide guidance that is attainable and realistic. As the standard applies to a diverse group of sectors and producers it is recognized that not all considerations may be applicable for each commodity and place of production.

Separate sector specific producer guides will be developed that will provide detailed information and examples to assist producers in achieving the biosecurity goals that are outlined in the standard.

Why is the CFIA involved in the development of the standard and does this mean it is considered a regulatory requirement?

The standard is not a regulatory requirement by the CFIA.

The CFIA was identified as the most appropriate federal body to partner with Industry and AAFC in order to facilitate the development of a nationally consistent approach to biosecurity for priority commodities in Canada.

How was the document developed?

A biosecurity advisory committee was formed to use the collective expertise from sector and producer organizations, producers, academia, and federal and provincial specialists. The biosecurity committee guides the development of the standard to ensure the guidance is practical, relevant and that the impact of the guidance or recommendations is considered from a commerce

perspective. The Greenhouse, Nursery and Floriculture Biosecurity Advisory Committee (GNFBAC) was formed in April of 2014 and since then has met on a monthly basis to develop the standard. Please refer to the following website for a list of the sector organizations that are members of the advisory committee: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/plant-protection/biosecurity/notice-to-industry-2014-11-26/eng/1416942278467/1416942280858>

What are the benefits to implementing biosecurity measures?

Benefits from implementing biosecurity measures in a place of production include:

- meeting business objectives in order to maintain and access new international and domestic markets;
- decreased production losses;
- mitigating the introduction of pests that are currently not present;
- containing and minimizing pests that may already be present; and
- meeting responsibilities to neighbours and industry to ensure that pests are not introduced to someone else.

Why was the standard developed when there are other provincial and sector documents that outline biosecurity measures?

Industry, provincial and federal government agencies have worked in collaboration to develop and implement a variety of farm-level certification programs. The framework of the standard builds upon these strengths, and provides a national farm-level biosecurity standard for the GNF sectors. The standard provides nationally consistent guidance to assist in the development of individual farm biosecurity plans, or to enhance but not supersede existing farm level programs, such as CanadaGAP™ and other regional or provincial programs. A farm biosecurity plan is an integral component of Preventative Control Plan (PCP) as identified in the CFIA's Integrated Agency Inspection Model (iAIM).

The development process is supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) under the Growing Forward 2 Agricultural Policy Framework. Growing Forward 2 programs focus on innovation, competitiveness and market development to ensure Canadian producers and processors have the tools and resources they need to continue to innovate and capitalize on emerging market opportunities. The Growing Forward 2 funding supports a number of initiatives that encourage sectors to proactively manage risks. The biosecurity standards provide a nationally consistent approach that supports the other two components of this funding framework. The other two components¹ include:

- 1) the federal - provincial cost sharing for outreach, education and implementation of biosecurity (on-farm food safety and traceability); and
- 2) the federal – industry partnership programs such as AgriInnovation, AgriCompetitiveness and AgriMarketing (Integrated Assurance Systems).

When will the document be available to stakeholders?

The standard will be finalized and posted on the CFIA external website by April of 2016.

¹ <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-us/key-departmental-initiatives/growing-forward-2/?id=1294780620963>