

# NURSERY PAPERS

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## ENSURING BUSINESS CONTINUITY DURING BIOSECURITY INCURSIONS

**Biosecurity is one of the most important challenges for the Australian horticulture sector and its supply chains. A biosecurity incursion on a production nursery business, or region can be devastating for the business as it manages the ecological, regulatory, operational, social and financial fall out.**

Incursions typically create a ripple effect that goes beyond the affected business, and which permeates through the broader industry network and horticultural supply chain.

This Nursery Paper covers the methods available to growers to ensure business continuity during biosecurity incursions to help identify priority risks, prepare for disruption, minimise operational impacts and downtime; and support social and economic recovery from the disruption to the supply of products or services.

### SUMMARY

- As domestic and international trade picks up, so too does the industry's exposure to inevitable biosecurity incursions
- Historically, the management processes have focused on managing ecological risks and adhering to regulatory processes, but the social and economic dimensions associated with incursions, should also be considered.
- A levy-funded project *Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry* (NY18010), has assessed the economic and social impacts that occur as a result of a biosecurity incursion and provides resources to help growers prepare for disruption.
- A series of decision guides are available which will aid a nursery business in the continuity of operations during a biosecurity incursion.
- The decision guides cover the lifecycle of a biosecurity incursion including Preparedness, Incursion Impact and Recovery and Review.

### BACKGROUND

As part of the levy-funded project *'Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry'* (NY18010) a survey of production nurseries was undertaken which sought to examine the social and economic impacts of biosecurity incursions.

According to that study, 40% of participants (n=32) had been impacted by a biosecurity incursion. Growers reported increased costs, increased workload, restricted trade and stock losses as the biggest impacts of those incursions.

On average, participants spent around \$15,000 managing incursions and destroyed an average of \$98,000 worth of stock. However, it's worth noting that these values are positively skewed with 44% of participants not needing to destroy stock.

In addition to the quantifiable financial impact, a quarter of those surveyed said they had lost customers due to incursions.

A qualitative survey was also implemented which found that one of the most common themes for growers was a concern around 'preparedness' for future biosecurity incursions. The levels of preparedness varied amongst participants, however it was widely agreed that this was a critical component of running a production nursery.

To ensure that production nurseries have the capability and capacity to manage biosecurity incursions, a series of decision guides have been produced which assist nurseries in the implementation of key activities before, during and after a biosecurity incursion.



## About the decision guides

The decision guides developed by the levy-funded project 'Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry' (NY18010), set up basic priority questions at each stage; with an intention to identify weaknesses or vulnerabilities in the business or nursery production processes.

It's important to remember that comprehensive resources already exist for nursery operators to access to effectively prepare for and manage an incursion, in the form of BioSecure HACCP and the various communication alerts distributed by industry.

These discussion guides are designed as a complementary resource to the BioSecure HACCP program and other industry-led advice. They should be reviewed and applied in tandem with other programs in order to best prepare for and manage biosecurity incursions.

## The role of BioSecure HACCP

The first step in preparing for biosecurity incursions is the development of an Action Plan.

BioSecure HACCP has been established as the grower applied plant protection and biosecurity program for the management of endemic and exotic plant pest incursions. This program is industry-specific and is an invaluable resource designed to assist growers in determining their pest, disease and weed risks as well as to guide their businesses in the implementation of management strategies.

The content included in the BioSecure HACCP program includes:

- Identification of pathways for plant pests
- Control points within the cropping system
- High health procedures to reducing risks
- Recording processes for managing risks
- Electronic document management
- Traceability

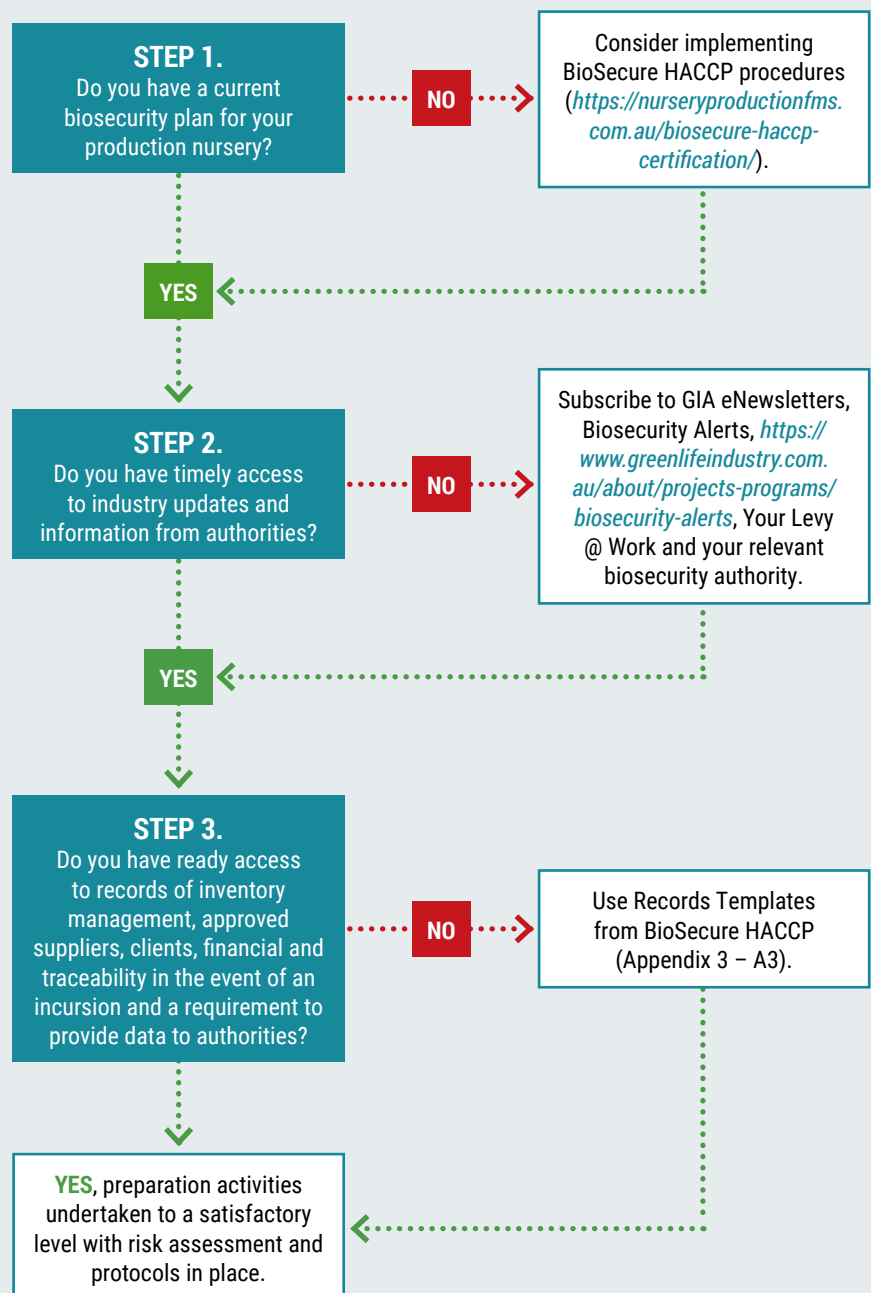
**BioSecure HACCP is the Action Plan that sits within a broader business continuity plan.**

# PREPARING FOR A BIOSECURITY INCURSION

### KEY STEPS:

1. Recognise priority risks and assess potential impact to plant stock, supply chain and business. Growers should also pay attention to all incursions across Australia, even if not directly affected, as it could impact on the supply of inputs, particularly propagation material.
2. Prepare your Action Plan
3. Stay up to date with key information from industry/authorities
4. Communication to priority contacts staff, suppliers, clients.  
Ensure everyone is on the same page

## Preparation Decision Guide



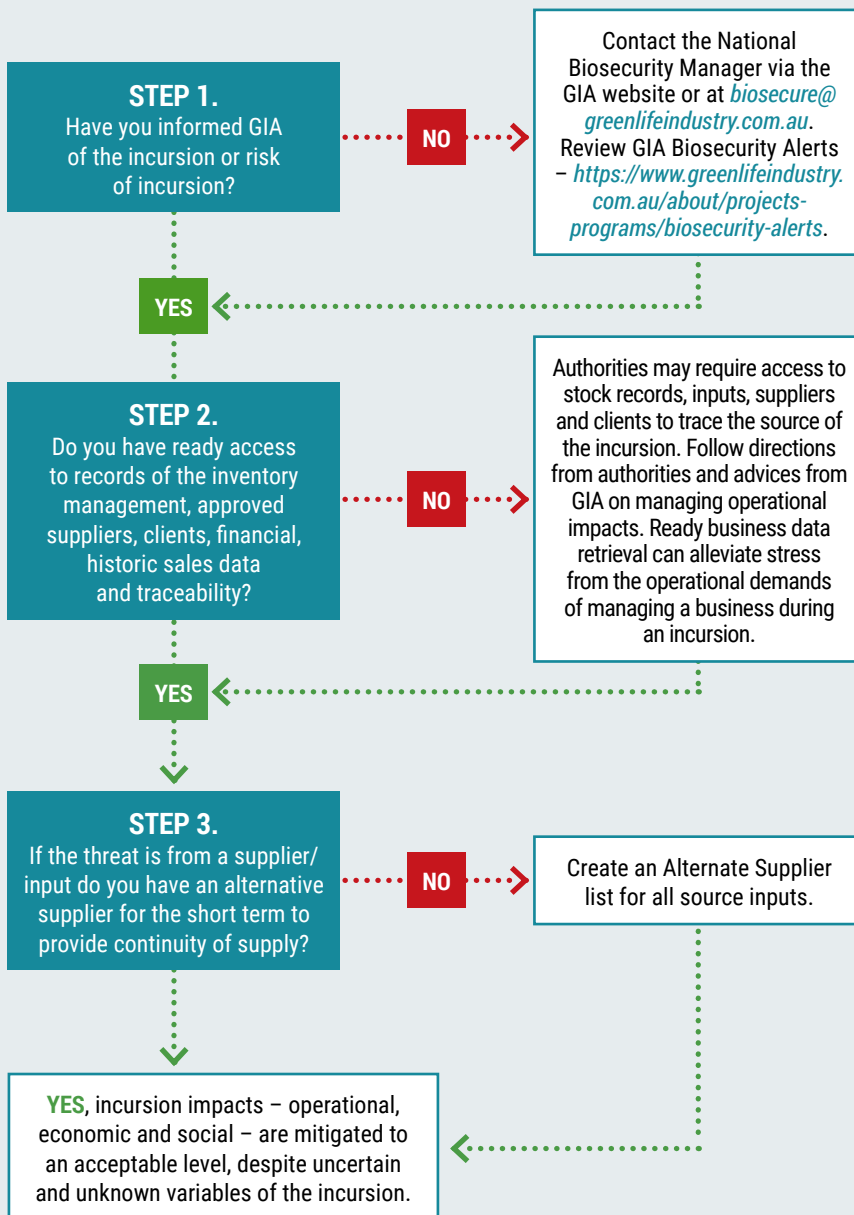


## DURING AN INCURSION EVENT

### KEY STEPS:

1. Identify operational impacts – movement restrictions, surveillance, pest control procedures, administration tasks, quarantine and destruction of stock
2. Identify economic impacts which will arise from operational impacts such as increased workloads and labour costs, reduced value of stock and restricted trade
3. Identify social impacts – stress arising from the operational demands of managing a business during the incursion response; financial implications of the incursion for the business; conditions of high uncertainty; difficulties in social relations with government authorities; and reputation with clients and other nursery businesses

## Incursion Impacts Decision Guide



## Tips for ensuring BUSINESS CONTINUITY

The levy funded project *'Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry'* (NY18010), was led by Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland, with input from stakeholders and a broad cohort of growers. Here are the industry's top tips for ensuring business continuity:

1. Be prepared – preparing for a biosecurity incursion should be one of your most important business priorities
2. Leverage your industry levy-funded resources – growers should utilise the decision guides covered in this nursery paper and consider adopting BioSecure HACCP as a primary means for managing biosecurity incursions
3. Undertake 'drills' and scenario-based exercises – it will be difficult to identify all gaps and weaknesses in an action plan until a plan is implemented. Therefore, drills and practice runs are encouraged
4. Subscribe to key industry newsletters and biosecurity alerts
5. Maintain regular communication with industry personnel. Have contact details easily accessible
6. Ensure key business records are easily accessible, and preferably electronic, so it can be provided to authorities if needed
7. Network with peers, particularly those who have had experience with biosecurity incursions
8. As part of your preparation, consider opportunities to diversify customers and identify alternate suppliers to mitigate impacts of any business closures



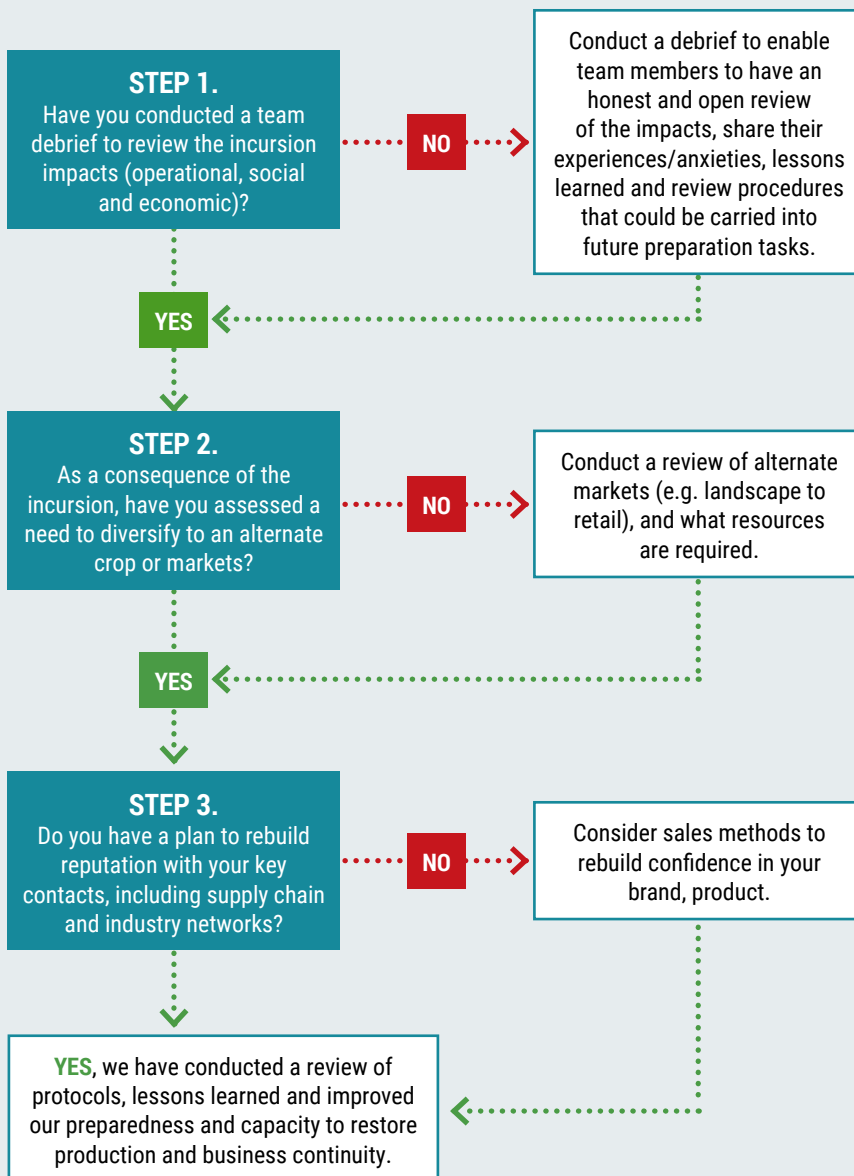
## AFTER A BIOSECURITY INCURSION

### KEY STEPS:

1. Assess capability to change practices to minimise operational impacts
2. Rebuild markets to restore economic recovery
3. Restore/assess supply chain
4. Restore reputation with key contacts
5. Review Preparation Decision Guide in light of lessons learned workloads and labour costs, reduced value of stock and restricted trade
6. Identify social impacts – stress arising from the operational demands of managing a business during the incursion response; financial implications of the incursion for the business; conditions of high uncertainty; difficulties in social relations with government authorities; and reputation with clients and other nursery businesses



## Recovery & Review Decision Guide



### FURTHER INFORMATION

BioSecure HACCP: Guidelines for Managing Biosecurity in Nursery Production 4th Edition, <https://nurseryproductionfms.com.au/biosecure-haccp-certification/>

Final report and decision guide for levy-funded project Ensuring business continuity during biosecurity incursions – social and economic research learnings for the production nursery industry (NY18010): <https://www.horticulture.com.au/growers/help-your-business-grow/research-reports-publications-fact-sheets-and-more/ny18010/>

Greenlife Industry Australia Biosecurity Alerts: <https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/about/projects-programs/biosecurity-alerts>

Past editions of nursery papers are available online on the Greenlife Industry Australia website: <https://www.greenlifeindustry.com.au/communications-centre>