

GTA MARKET NOTIFICATIONS



Notice No. 08 of 22—20 October 2022

TOPIC: Outcome of the Grain and Plant Products Export Industry Consultative
Committee Meeting 5 October 2022

DISTRIBUTION: GTA Members – primary contact list. Please circulate to all appropriate internal parties

1. Status Update

Grain Trade Australia is a member of the Grain and Plant Products Export Industry Consultative Committee (GPPEICC) representing the interests of GTA members.

The GPPEICC is the principal forum for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to consult with the grain, fodder, nuts, seed and timber industries on export inspection and certification, export market access and other relevant issues.

The most recent meeting was held on 5 October 2022 and issues of relevance to GTA members are outlined below.

2. Meeting Outcomes

DAWE Finance and Budget Issues

Industry debt levels with DAFF continue the trend of reducing. As always, industry is encouraged to pay due fees on-time or contact DAFF if their circumstances make payments by the due date difficult.

While the final revenue and expenses report for the 2021/22 season are not yet available, given the large export program, a surplus of revenue over expenses is expected. A decision on what to do with that surplus revenue will be made in the coming months and industry will be advised.

The Cost Recovery Implementation Statement (CRIS) outlining DAFF fees and charges for the 2022/23 year will be released shortly following recent feedback from industry.

Operational Matters

Given travel restrictions have lifted, DAFF auditors are again conducting onsite announced and unannounced audits. The most common form of non-compliance identified at Registered Establishment (RE) audits continue to be a) Incomplete record keeping b) Pest control and c) Hygiene.

It was noted that the national network of Regional Assurance Managers (RAM) is progressing well and industry and RAMS are communicating collaboratively and resolving many industry issues.

The commencement of the Accredited Grain Surveyor Assurance (AGSA) scheme for bulk vessels is postponed until further notice. Industry should continue to operate as usual, in accordance with current processes.

DAFF have a Strategic Plan for 2020-30. Under that plan, a number of projects are either underway or planned, including:

- A draft of the Grain Storage and Assets Management Standard (Standard) has been developed. Over the coming harvest the Standard will be piloted at a number of premises to test all aspects of the draft and its implementation. Following the pilot completion, expected March 2023, detailed findings and plans for release of the Standard will be provided to industry.
- As a key element of the implementation of the Standard, discussions continue on developing a framework for the adoption of new technology for assurance, which will enable DAFF to integrate with industry systems in real-time and contribute to the automation of assurance and verification processes for grain assessment and information transfer.
- Ongoing relatively minor legislative amendments to the Export Control (Plants and Plant Product) Rules 2021 (Plant Rules) are currently being developed.

Work continues with a pilot planned for the 2022/23 harvest to introduce a more formal approach to the collection and identification of “freedom from pests” in exports and to widen the scope to a broader range of pests and commodities. The hope is that rather than individual consignments undergoing testing for pests by each exporter, a wider “port zone” sampling and testing can be done thereby cutting costs to industry. Following the pilot to determine its feasibility, industry will be consulted on any changes to the certification of export consignments prior to implementation.

GTA gave an update on the activities of a Working Group formed to explore the feasibility of combining the roles of the Bulk Vessel Inspection Authorised Officer (AO) and Marine Surveyors (MS) performing bulk vessel survey. Further discussions are required to explore options to manage the many issues that have arisen with this proposal.

Digital Reforms and IT System Issues

Industry will soon be invited to contribute to Digital Trade Initiatives. Feedback from industry will be used by DAFF to plan for the next tranche of changes to IT systems.

DAFF has made the decision to not progress the development of its new export documentation system ECMOD (originally called NEXDOC) for grain and will now enhance the legacy system EXDOC. The EXDOC system will be improved in a number of areas to enhance its use by industry.

Some relatively minor enhancements to PEMS have recently occurred and been released to industry. Further changes are planned for release in 2023

The planning for E-Phyto implementation is still being performed by DAFF, and DAFF continue to work towards its release in March 2023. E-Phyto was originally expected to be completed by the end of 2021 as a component of the NEXDOC implementation.

3. Further Information

Contact GTA to seek further information on any of the above issues.

Further information on GPPEICC and its membership can be found at <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/partnerships/consultative-committees/gppeicc>