

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia joins international plant health research network

The future of plant health in Australia is looking brighter with a new opportunity for international collaboration in research on pests and diseases that are common threats.

Australia's [Plant Biosecurity Research Initiative](#) (PBRI), has just signed a memorandum of understanding with the [European Phytosanitary Research and Coordination network](#) (Euphresco).

Euphresco is a network of organisations that fund research projects and coordinate national research in plant health. By helping to coordinate transnational and collaborative research this network helps optimise limited research resources and avoids duplication.

PBRI coordinates and supports plant biosecurity research in Australia through a partnership between Australia's plant Research and Development Corporations, Plant Health Australia and the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

PBRI Chairman Greg Fraser said Plant Health Australia has been developing a relationship with Euphresco since 2017, including collaborating in the International Plant Sentinel Network.

"PBRI believes that collaboration is essential as a lot of the pests that we deal with are global pests, so we need to be operating in more of a global environment.

Program Director Dr Jo Luck said the signing of this MOU with Euphresco signals the sharing of knowledge between countries on common threats to agriculture and native environments plus it creates efficiencies in research investment.

"The benefit of working with Euphresco is preventing the fragmentation of research and building stronger research efforts to benefit industry," Dr Luck said.

Euphresco Coordinator Baldissera Giovanni said he is looking forward to more fruitful discussions and to building stronger links with the research community and plant health stakeholders in Australia.

He explained that Euphresco projects start as ideas, based on national priorities and are proposed by each Euphresco member. Then, through discussions, exchange and networking, the suggestions become projects.

"Following discussions on the research topics proposed in 2019, collaborations have now been secured between organisations in thirty-five countries worldwide and fourteen research projects will start in coming months," Mr Giovanni said.

The MOU between the PBRI and Euphresco has been signed as part of the International Year of Plant Health in 2020, promoting greater collaboration for international efforts in plant health.

Photo caption: Euphresco Coordinator Mr Baldissera Giovanni and PBRI Program Director Dr Jo Luck at the Plant Biosecurity Research Symposium in Brisbane in August 2019

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PLANT BIOSECURITY RESEARCH INITIATIVE MEMBERS