



ADW 2024 - The challenges of unculturables and their vectors

Annual Diagnostics Workshop (ADW) 2024 planning is underway by the Network Implementation Working Group (NIWG). Registration for EOIs have closed and abstracts are being assessed by the NIWG.

ADW 2024 will be held at the Twin Towns Conference Centre, 2 Wharf Street, Tweed Heads, NSW from 19 - 20 March 2024.

The theme of ADW 2024 includes topics surrounding:

- plant pathogens for which obtaining axenic cultures is difficult or yet to be made possible, such as viruses, fastidious and unculturable bacteria (e.g., *Candidatus Liberibacter* spp., phytoplasmas, *Xylella* spp.), obligate fungi (rusts, powdery mildew, etc.), and oomycetes (downy mildews, *Phytophthora* spp. etc.)

- the pest organisms that transmit these pathogens (fungi, nematodes, arthropods, etc.)
- the physical mechanisms that spread these pests and pathogens, including grafting, tissue culture, and crop management practices
- the relevant and innovative methods developed to detect and identify these pathogens, e.g., end point and quantitative PCR, sequencing, HTS, eDNA.

This annual event is an important opportunity for NPBDN members to learn, exchange tips and techniques, and to network with colleagues in the field. These workshops aim to build capability for plant biosecurity diagnostics in Australia.

Not a NPBDN member? Register [here](#).

Find out more

EOI for review/verification of National Diagnostic Protocols (NDPs) | Closing 10 January 2024

Expressions of interest (EOIs) are invited from plant biosecurity diagnosticians or research scientists to undertake the following projects:

Review and verify an NDP:

- *Ralstonia solanacearum* (Moko and Bugtok disease)
- *Cryptotermes spp.* (Drywood termites)

Verify an NDP:

- *Homalodisca vitripennis* (Glassy winged sharpshooter)

Update a draft NDP:

- *Drosophila suzuki* (Spotted winged drosophila).

Timelines:

- Applications close at 5.00pm AEDT **10 January 2024**.
- Successful applicants will be notified before **31 January 2024**.
- EOIs will only be accepted if review and verification reports can be submitted by **1 May 2024**.

For more details on the eligibility, application process, assessment process, guide to budgets, and timeline, please visit the NPBDN website via the button below.

[Visit the website](#)



Xylella Workshop at APPS, 24 November 2023

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostics Network (NPBDN) funded a *Xylella* workshop that was held on the back of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society (APPS) conference on 24 November in Adelaide, South Australia. NPBDN sponsored the travel and accommodation for 10 of its members to attend the conference and workshop.

The workshop was delivered by Toni Chapman (NSW DPI), Monica Kehoe (WA DPIRD), Luciano Rigano (MPI NZ), Pragma Kant (AVR VIC), Rachel Mann (PHA), Craig Elliott (P2R2 consulting), and Piotr Trebicki (Macquarie University). The workshop included:

- Case study presentations on the epidemiology, diagnostic and surveillance protocols, and management of *Xylella* in the Americas, France, Italy, and Spain
- Training on the identification, surveillance, and diagnostics of *Xylella*, including the draft National Diagnostics Protocol (NDP)
- In-field demonstrations of the type of material to collect and what to send for diagnostic testing.

The workshop was aimed at Australia's biosecurity policy makers, emergency response teams, diagnosticians, and industry personnel, and was attended by 32 attendees in total.

We thank the Networks Implementation Working Group (NIWG) for assessing the *Xylella* workshop application and EOIs for NPBDN-sponsored travel support to the workshop.



Sugarcane Pathology workshop offered by Sugarcane Research Australia

Sugarcane Research Australia (SRA) is hosting Sugarcane Pathology two-day workshops on 27 - 28 February 2024 (Group 1) and 29 Feb – 1 March 2024 (Group 2).

During this practical and hands-on course, you will learn from SRA's pathology team and observe diseases in the field. The course will also provide you with the latest disease research, and will cover the identification, diagnosis and management of important endemic and exotic diseases of sugarcane.

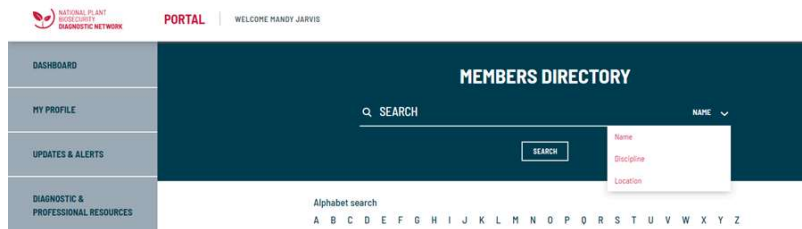
Visit SRA's website for more information, or contact SRA's Manager, Biosecurity and Disease Screening, Dr Shamsul Bhuiyan on:

- Mobile: 0400 771 304
- Email: sbhuiyan@sugarresearch.com.au

[Visit the website](#)

NPBDN website refresh | Expert Register

NPBDN members can now easily search the Members Directory by name, discipline or location when logged into the NPBDN member portal.



We anticipate that this update will further strengthen the connections within the NPBDN network, enabling members to find and contact fellow members based in a specific location or with expertise of interest.

Take a look and get to know your fellow NPBDN network members today!

[Visit the Member Portal](#)

New podcasts and webinar series

'The Full Bottle'

Citrus Australia's podcast 'The Full Bottle' brings you the latest information from growers and researchers, aiming to educate, inspire, and entertain citrus growers and businesses around Australia. The podcast is available from most streaming platforms (Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Amazon Music, YouTube), with new episodes released on the last Monday of each month.

Tune into Episode 18: What's bugging citrus biosecurity to hear NPBDN member, Francesco Martoni, speak about research that is underway to detect and survey for exotic pests threatening the citrus industry in Australia.

[Read more](#)

'Beyond Myrtle Rust'

'Beyond Myrtle Rust' (BMR) is a collaborative, multi-faceted research program by Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research and funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment (MBIE) Endeavour fund. The program aims to study the behaviour, ecology, and impacts of the disease myrtle rust (MR) in New Zealand.

As part of the program, Beyond Myrtle Rust is producing a webinar series. Recordings of over 30 webinars in the series are available on the Landcare research website, covering topics including:

- pathogen dynamics
- ecosystem impacts
- novel mitigation techniques
- Kaitiakitanga & Māori-led solutions.

[Read more](#)

Career Opportunities

PhD scholarship opportunities

A PhD scholarship at the Ecosciences Precinct (University of Queensland) is being advertised on the NPBDN website.

Job opportunities

Visit the page on the NPBDN website to keep up to date with current job opportunities.

[Visit careers](#)

Career Profile

This month the career profile will be on NPBDN member Shamila Abeynayake, who is a Molecular Scientist at the Plant Innovation Centre (PIC), Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

[Read more](#)



About the Network

The National Plant Biosecurity Diagnostic Professional Development and Protocols Projects are coordinated and delivered by Plant Health Australia and are funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The objectives of the Projects are to enhance and strengthen Australia's diagnostic and surveillance capacity and capability to identify priority plant pests that impact on plant industries, environment and the community.

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