

CAWS Discussion Panel

Community involvement in weed surveillance and management

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Summary The general public often does not understand what weed managers do, how they do it or the reasons behind strategic weed management. Weed managers are receiving increased pressure from the public to change practices, such as reducing the use of chemicals. Are we successfully engaging with the community regarding these issues? Does the community have the necessary tools and opportunities to get involved? Why is the weed management industry consistently at the whim of changing political and economic circumstances? These questions will be explored in a panel discussion session at the 19th Australasian Weeds Conference. Join the panel of experts to discuss the barriers and opportunities to community engagement in the weed management sector.

One proposed new tool under development by Plant Health Australia (PHA), that could potentially assist with the challenges faced by weed managers, is the 'National Surveillance System for Weeds and Plant Pests: Virtual Coordination Centre', a current

project funded under the Australian Government National Landcare Program Innovation Grants. This project is designed to facilitate an innovative national system capable of providing and receiving real time surveillance information on weeds and plant pests. An introductory workshop, held in conjunction with the panel discussion session, will give participants the opportunity to learn more about this project and provide comment on the type of weeds surveillance data that could be contributed to and received through the proposed national facility.

Keywords Community engagement, weed management, surveillance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This discussion session is jointly sponsored by the Council of Australasian Weeds Societies, and Plant Health Australia, the latter through funding from the Australian Government. Thanks to the panel members for their participation.