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Citrus Australia has asked the Government to activate the Emergency Plant Pest Response (EPPR) levy on citrus to help fund the response to the citrus canker outbreak in the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia. Citrus canker is thought to be technically and feasibly eradicable and industry is supportive of the response to date. There have been no further infections found in WA since May 8 last year.

Detections in the NT are expected to continue as surveillance teams look for the remaining trees believed to have been infected. Additional finds are seen as a positive sign the response is effective in its strategy. All finds in the NT have been linked back to the original source.

The Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) permits the Australian Government to, at industry request, underwrite the industry contribution to an emergency response, but the industry must have an agreed mechanism for repayment. The EPPR levy and charge on citrus were introduced in 2008 for this purpose.

Citrus Australia is a signatory to the EPPRD on behalf of all citrus growers. Under the deed, citrus canker is rated as a category two pest of concern and as such industry is responsible for 20% of the cost of the response whilst government (Federal and state) are responsible for 80%.

The citrus canker response to the end of December 2019 is budgeted to \$18.7 million meaning industry will pay approximately \$3.7 million.

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I have requested that the Minister activate the EPPR levies and charges at the following rates:

EPPR levy	Rate	Unit
Citrus - oranges in bulk	1.05	\$/tonne
Citrus - oranges not in bulk	2.1	cents/box
Citrus - other in bulk	1.05	\$/tonne
Citrus - other not in bulk	2.1	cents/box

We estimate that the levy will be required for approximately 5 years based on industry's 5 year production average of 715,000 tonnes per annum.

I first made growers aware of this on Wednesday, 5th March. A formal objection period will be held starting 11 March 2019 and ending 12 April 2019.

Growers are invited to submit objections and to provide the reasons for those objections to myself and the Department of Agriculture and Water resources at these addresses Nathan.Hancock@citrusaustralia.com.au and response.policy@agriculture.gov.au.

More information on the citrus canker incursion can be found at the Federal Government's national pest and disease outbreak website [here](#) and from the Citrus Australia website [here](#).

The citrus canker outbreak has highlighted our susceptibility to exotic pest incursions and refocused Citrus Australia's energies to address gaps in industry's preparedness for future events.

Growers can contact me with any questions or concerns regarding this information.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Hancock
Chief Executive Officer
Citrus Australia Ltd
Friday 8 March, 2019