

CHESTNUTS AUSTRALIA INC.



CHESTNUT BLIGHT IS STILL A MAJOR ISSUE FOR NE VICTORIA

Through recent survey work conducted by the Chestnut Industry Biosecurity Officer (IBO) we have found new incidences of Chestnut Blight in trees on both commercial and 'hobby farm' properties.

Chestnuts Australia Inc. (CAI) is declaring outbreaks in both Eurobin and Wandiligong. The sites are near, or on past infected properties (IP's) so it appears obvious that there are still remnants of Blight within the Upper Ovens Valley region, the location of the original outbreak 12 years ago.

The survey work previously undertaken was interrupted by the outbreak of COVID. As a result, both the Department and CAI were unable to undertake the annual survey work in 2020 and 2021. If so, we may have isolated the problem earlier.

With the removal of COVID restrictions the IBO has been able to implement a rigorous survey regime and over the past 12 months has visited over 120 properties and inspected over 33,000 trees. It is from this work that Blight has been observed, samples taken, and test results achieved.

The other point that CAI is investigating is whether the wet Winter and Spring conditions have been an additional trigger for Blight resulting in the increase in infected trees.

Blight has been isolated from many of the samples but so have other disease problems like *Nectria*, *Botryosphaeria* dieback and Eucalyptus blight.

CAI is calling on all landowners with chestnut trees on their properties to be even more vigilant and undertake their own inspections and

- a) Report any suspect trees,
- b) Submit the survey results to CAI so they can be added to the industry database.

If you have been notified of having an infected tree(s) there is an immediate need to remove the tree, including the stump, and burn the material as soon as practical. If it is not possible to burn, due to restrictions, you should spray the plant material with copper and cover the material with a tarpaulin until it is possible to burn.

The industry and the NE Region must work together to eliminate any infected trees and continue to reduce the disease load as we work towards complete eradication.

CAI is working with landowners and the relevant agencies to assist in the process of tree removal and destruction.

For more information contact:

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