

PAEC Inquiry into the 2026-27 Budget Estimates

Agriculture portfolio

Question taken on notice

Wednesday 20 May 2026

Question 1: (page 4)

Jade BENHAM: Actually, to save time, if I could get a list of potential biosecurity threats to the Victorian ag sector, that would be really handy.

Michaela SETTLE: It is going to be a little bit hard to provide something like that, because the whole thing with biosecurity is it is incoming, it is around our export markets, it is hard to know –

Jade BENHAM: Yes, but we know what is coming; we know what is a threat. We know that foot-and-mouth disease is a real threat. We know fire ants will get here eventually, just like we knew varroa mite would eventually get here, because bees can fly across a river. So if we can get maybe the top five biosecurity threats that the department sees, that would be terrific.

Michaela SETTLE: Of course but we obviously cannot cover off on all, and that is why we have such a strong research program.

Jade BENHAM: Obviously. But the top five for the coming season would be terrific.

Michaela SETTLE: Yes.

Response:

Victoria faces a complex and evolving biosecurity risk landscape, with numerous exotic plant and animal diseases, and pest species present in neighbouring countries and across Australia.

Current notable known risks to Victoria include H5N1 Avian Influenza, Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Lumpy Skin Disease, Asian Swine Fever, Red Imported Fire Ant, Xylella, Polyphagous Shot-hole Borer and Brown Marmorated Stink Bug.