



Australian Government
**Rural Industries Research and
Development Corporation**

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Dear truffle grower,

The truffle industry in Australia is entering into a new phase of growth with many new truffières entering the productive phase each year and the industry beginning to reach a sustainable size. However as production increases, issues are inevitably arising, which the industry as a whole needs to address.

The loss of truffles before reaching maturity is emerging as a potential threat to the profitability of the industry. In the country as a whole, losses are likely to increase in coming years, as more properties produce and higher yields are achieved. This issue was identified as a priority by RIRDC (the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation) at a meeting of growers initiated by RIRDC in 2008.

A recent meeting of bodies associated with around 95% of truffle production in Australia agreed that the loss of truffles in the ground was a priority R&D issue, and asked RIRDC to coordinate the collection of information on it.

The attached survey is a first step, and aims to identify the magnitude and distribution of the problem across Australia as well as identify potential causes and key issues for further research.

Truffle rot is characterised by softness of the fruiting body; discoloration, ranging from off-white to brown to pink and a repulsive smell. Rot is often associated with slug and snail damage but can occur without evidence of prior injury. Truffière management, climate and bacterial or fungal pathogens are also possible causes.

We understand that some growers regard as confidential, information about their management practices and yields. However, if we are to establish an industry approach to production and marketing issues, it is imperative that we have accurate and complete information to ensure to most beneficial outcomes for the whole industry.

We therefore ask that you fill in the survey as accurately and completely as possible., Results will be made available to all growers and will benefit the industry as a whole.

Please email your results to newindustries@rirdc.gov.au or post them to me at the above address.

Regards

Alan Davey

Senior research manager, RIRDC