

Post entry quarantine virus screening and its importance to the pulse industry

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Protecting the pulse industry from pest and diseases starts at the border. The Australian Grains Genebank (AGG) Post Entry Quarantine (PEQ) program in Horsham, has been operational for over twenty years. It is our duty of care to the industry to ensure all newly imported accessions are free from exotic diseases which have the potential to cause losses in production, yield and/or seed quality. When new varieties of temperate pulses arrive in the Australia, they are required to undertake a full growth cycle in a Department of Agriculture (DA) approved facility before they can be released and deposited in the Genebank. The plants are monitored under strict guidelines for fungal pathogens and are screened for exotic seedborne viruses. Approximately 600 lines of temperate pulses are screened for six viruses, using serological and molecular methods, annually. When all the screening requirements have been fulfilled, and harvest is complete, the seed is signed off and released by DA; with all seed being deposited into the Genebank.