



8 August 2025

# Potato Mop-Top Virus

## INFORMATION SHEET

Potato mop-top virus (PMTV; *Pomovirus solani*) was detected in Tasmania in July 2025. Biosecurity Tasmania is responding to the detection, working with impacted growers and potato industry bodies to determine the distribution of PMTV in Tasmania and inform appropriate response actions.

## What is PMTV?

Potato mop-top virus is a plant virus that can affect the leaves, shoots and tubers of potato plants. It causes distortion during plant development and reduces the quality of tuber flesh.

There are no food safety or human health risks associated with PMTV, and potatoes are safe to consume.

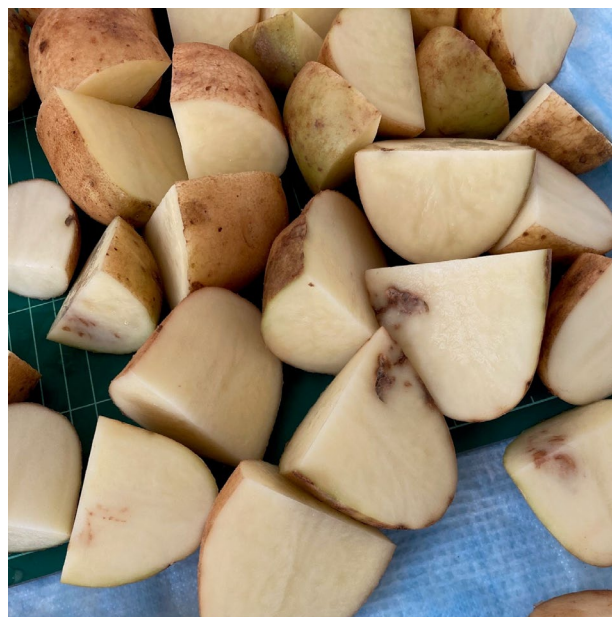
Affected potatoes display varied symptoms including:

- distortions to the skin of tubers
- cracking of tuber flesh
- Necrosis (rotting) of tuber flesh
- rust-coloured arcs, streaks or flecks in the tuber flesh.

PMTV is transmitted by the soil-borne pathogen that causes powdery scab in potatoes (*Spongospora subterranea*).

Powdery scab is a common pathogen and is present in Tasmania and mainland Australia.

PMTV can remain viable in powdery scab spores in soil for at least 12 years, even in the absence of host plants.



PMTV in cut potatoes (NRE Tas)

## How was PMTV found in Tasmania?

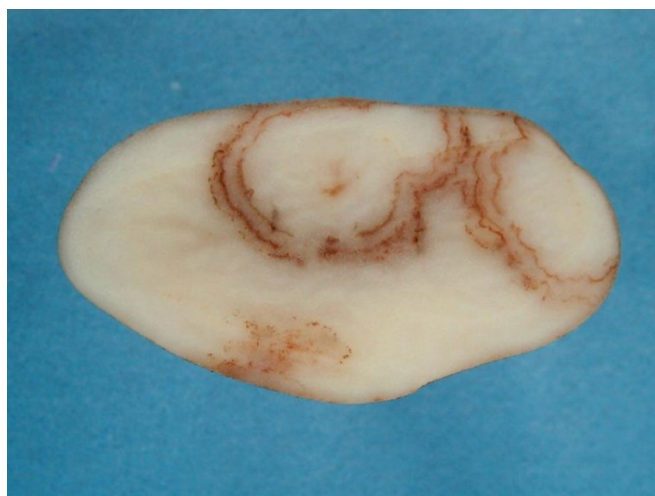
PMTV was detected in potato tubers originating from a property in Northwest Tasmania. This detection occurred as a result of an industry member submitting samples to Biosecurity Tasmania after finding concerning symptoms within the flesh of several potatoes identified for processing.

# What is Biosecurity Tasmania doing?

Biosecurity response actions were activated by Biosecurity Tasmania upon receipt of the initial suspected diagnosis, and an Incident Management Team has since been formed to manage the ongoing emergency response to PMTV.

This is the first time PMTV has been detected in Australia and Biosecurity Tasmania is working with state and national industry participants, other government jurisdictions, and the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests to minimise the impact of PMTV on Tasmanian industry. Tasmania will also work with these groups to determine the feasibility of eradication.

These discussions will inform ongoing response activities in Tasmania.



Rust coloured arcs, streaks or flecks in tuber flesh. (Credit: New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries)

While discussions occur between government and industry on the overall direction of the response in Tasmania to PMTV, Biosecurity Tasmania is working with impacted growers and potato industry bodies to conduct additional surveillance and diagnostics of potato stock, and complete trace-forward and trace-back operations to determine the potential distribution of PMTV.

## What can you do?

Always remain vigilant for any unusual signs of disease in potato plants and potato stock.

If you do suspect a plant pest disease is present on your property or in ware potatoes, report it immediately to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on **1800 084 881**.

Stay update to date with the biosecurity response by checking our website at [www.nre.tas.gov.au/currentalerts](http://www.nre.tas.gov.au/currentalerts) or scan this QR code:



Maintaining good farm biosecurity practices can also help limit the spread of plant pests and diseases, and aid in early detection if they are present.

A key pathway for PMTV to move into new areas is by being carried and transmitted by powdery scab, which is a soil-borne pathogen. Limiting soil movement from one area to another can help minimise spread of PMTV. This includes limiting soil movement within your property.

Some simple steps you can take to manage PMTV include:

- A dedicated high-pressure washdown station
- Clean clothing, boots, equipment, and machinery before and after use in production areas
- Limit the movement of contractor vehicles within production areas and paddocks whenever possible
- Report signs of disease to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline at **1800 084 881**.

