

FABI PARTICIPATES IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EMERGENCY PLANT PEST RESPONSE PLAN

Dr Brett Hurley of FABI was invited to participate in the South African Emergency Plant Pest Response Plan (SAEPPRP) workshop that took place at the Protea Hotel Fire and Ice, Pretoria from 11-14 August. This workshop was organised by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Directorate: Plant Health, with funding support from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The SAEPPRP provides an outline on the effective detection, identification, rapid response and mitigation of new plant pest arrivals in South Africa. One of the main objectives of the plan is to establish effective communication between different role players and in this regard participation in the workshop included representation from local and national government, academia and research organisations and industry. The aims of the workshop included clarifying the role of the different role players and providing inputs on possible amendments required to the SAEPPRP.

The development of an effective national strategy to respond to the increasing rate of plant pest introductions is crucial. Just in the forestry sector alone there have been five new insect pests of eucalypt trees detected in South Africa in the last ten years. The introduction of non-native insect pests and diseases poses a serious threat to the sustainability of forestry and agriculture in South Africa.

