

# DISEASE ALERT

## Detection of White Spot Disease in prawns

Biosecurity Queensland has confirmed a case of white spot disease (WSD) on an aquaculture farm south of Brisbane.

WSD is caused by a highly contagious virus that can infect any crustacean. It is an exotic disease to Australia and this is the first confirmed case recorded in an Australian aquaculture farm.

The virus that causes WSD is found throughout East, South East and South Asia, and the Americas.

A widespread outbreak of WSD would have a significant adverse impact on the Australian aquaculture industry as well as on trade, the environment and social amenity.

Infected prawns do not pose any human health risk and there is no suggestion that any product currently on the market is in any way affected.

Any unusual signs in prawns and other crustaceans must be reported to Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23.



### Description

Prawns with WSD may have a loose shell with numerous white spots (0.5-2.0 mm in diameter) on the inside surface of the shell and a pink to red discolouration.



Other signs to look for include:

- unusual mortality
- prawns coming to the edge or water surface
- prawns demonstrating unusual swimming patterns
- reduced feeding and failure to thrive.

## **What damage does it cause?**

Outbreaks of WSD often result in high and rapid mortality. In aquaculture operations WSD can result in 100% mortality within a few days of the onset of visible signs of the disease.

## **Spread**

The disease is primarily spread through the movement of infected animals or contaminated water. Birds feeding on infected animals can contribute to the spread of the disease.

## **What to do if you suspect WSD?**

Report it to **Biosecurity Queensland** on **13 25 23** as early detection is essential to rapid containment of this serious disease.

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