



Speech by

**Hon. HENRY PALASZCZUK**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Hansard 8 November 2001

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Red Banded Mango Caterpillar, Cape York Peninsula**

**Hon. H. PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Primary Industries and Rural Communities) (10.09 a.m.), by leave: I would like to inform the House that a quarantine zone in the Cape York Peninsula to prevent the spread of red banded mango caterpillar is due to be declared today. The establishment of the quarantine zone follows the detection of the red banded mango caterpillar in the Somerset area near the tip of the Cape York Peninsula. Fruit movement will be monitored at the Coen information and inspection centre. Any fruit intercepted will be seized and destroyed to prevent further spread of the caterpillar.

The quarantine zone will be a no-go zone for the movement of mangoes. These quarantine measures cover the movement into, out of and within the zone of mango plants, or part of plants and fruit, without approval from a DPI inspector. The quarantine zone is north of Coen and the movement of mango fruit within or out of the zone without approval of a DPI inspector will be prohibited.

DPI's response to the outbreak is under the red banded mango caterpillar contingency plan. This plan was developed by DPI Northwatch scientists and this involves further surveillance in northern Cape York Peninsula. The red banded mango caterpillar is a pest of mangoes in India, Asia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea and may be responsible for commercial losses. The discovery of the caterpillar near Somerset follows reports of caterpillar detections in the Torres Strait over the past few years by AQIS, most recently on Hammond Island in the Thursday Island group in August this year. The isolated nature of the latest detection and the quarantine measures being put in place effectively reduce this threat to a negligible level. However, DPI is also collaborating with other research agencies to develop a pre-emptive research proposal to elucidate the chemistry and biology of the caterpillar. I appeal to all residents and travellers in the Cape York Peninsula to cooperate with the quarantine restrictions and avoid moving mangoes within and out of the area.

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