

Question on Notice

No. 1576

Asked on 1 November 2018

MRS M MCMAHON ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what actions the government is taking to assist local prawn farmers with their biosecurity responsiveness?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question. I was pleased to join the Member on a tour of a local prawn farm to inspect their investments in on-farm biosecurity measures.

This Government is continuing to work closely with local prawn farmers as they return to production in the Logan area for the 2018/19 season. Biosecurity Queensland is maintaining regular communication with local operators and providing advice as required about farm biosecurity. Departmental officers will visit all farms to monitor the health of prawn stocks during this production season.

Biosecurity Queensland is providing test kits to local farmers to support early detection of disease during the production season. Early detection, including prioritised testing services at the Biosecurity Sciences Laboratory, will help farmers manage the risk of disease spreading throughout their farms or on to neighbouring farms and the environment.

An extensive surveillance program throughout Moreton Bay and north to Cairns is continuing. The most recent surveillance sampling conducted in Moreton Bay, Brisbane and Logan Rivers reported negative results for the virus that causes white spot.

Fishing restrictions are in place around prawn farms in the Logan area to reduce the possibility of reintroduction of disease. Additional targeted surveillance sampling in the Logan River will be undertaken to provide the farms with information to assist informed biosecurity management decisions.

Extensive communication programs continue, focussing on containing the spread of white spot syndrome virus by alerting people to the risks of moving raw prawns, yabbies and marine worms out of the white spot disease movement restriction area and reducing the likelihood of disease incursions by encouraging people not to use imported prawns as bait.

The Government will continue to work with local prawn farmers and the Australian Prawn Farmers Association to support Queensland's aquaculture industry.