agriculture, land reform & rural development
Department:
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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## Alert on the detection of Bud rot of palms (*Phytophthora palmivora*) in South Africa

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) hereby issues an alert on the detection of the Bud rot of palms (*Phytophthora palmivora*) in certain parts of the country. In August 2024, the National Plant Protection Organisation of South Africa (NPPOZA) confirmed the detection of *P. palmivora* in two commercial papaya orchards in the Mopani District in Limpopo, and three commercial papaya orchards in the Ehlanzeni District Municipality in Mpumalanga. NPPOZA in collaboration with different role players and stakeholders initiated a delimiting survey to determine the extent of spread of the pest in the country. This was done in accordance with the *P. palmivora* National Action Plan and relevant standards.

DALRRD is currently conducting delimiting surveys in all production areas to determine the extent of the spread. Phytosanitary measures are implemented to restrict the movement of host material from infested areas to non-infested areas unless such movement is authorised by means of a removal permit. Removal and/or movement of host material from affected areas to unaffected areas in the rest of the Republic of South Africa is restricted in accordance with the Agricultural Pests Act, 1983 (Act No. 36 of 1983) and Control Measures R.110 as amended to prevent further spread of this pest to other provinces.

Hundreds of plant species, including horticultural, ornamental and agricultural crops, have been infected by *P. palmivora*. Agricultural host crops include papaya, pineapple, citrus, black pepper, cocoa and coconut. Potential spread or establishment of *P. palmivora* from infested areas through host material to other areas may negatively affect domestic and international trade, as well as export

potential of relevant host commodities to various countries where it is recognised as a quarantine pest.

This pest can be managed by practicing effective cultural control, use of resistant varieties, chemical control, constant monitoring, and regulation of the removal of host material from quarantine (infested) to non-quarantine (non-infested) areas.

Farmers and community members are encouraged to practice effective cultural control and not to move host materials from infested areas to non-infested areas without authorisation. International travellers are advised to avoid illegal importation of agricultural commodities into South Africa as this may lead to the introduction of new pests and diseases that are expensive and difficult to manage.

**For more information on the pest, please contact:**

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**For more information**

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