

Name of PHCS applicant / member

Detection of Notifiable Pests and Root Cause Analysis (RCA) - Record Sheet

N.B. it is not essential to use this template, i.e. a business or organisation may have its own recording system to meet requirement 8.4.



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Root cause analysis (RCA) in plant pest management is the systematic process of investigating and establishing **WHY** a plant pest emerged or was introduced, rather than just managing the pest incursion or outbreak. By identifying and addressing the underlying causes, managers can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of pest management systems, leading to long-term solutions rather than temporary fixes.

Date	Name of person	Pest species detected and where (e.g. host or material)	Provide details of any statutory notices and outcomes (i.e. completion of compliance actions for pest and/or procedural issues)	Ask “Why?” Repeatedly - Use the “5 Whys” technique to drill down from the visible signs of the outbreak (including incursion) to identify the root cause (see reference tab 2). As part of this process consider all potential plant pest pathways and other contributing factors.	Set out and implement a plan that addresses the root causes - describe monitoring process to ensure the root causes have been addressed. Important note: any suspected notifiable pest must be reported to the plant health authorities immediately. See PHMS requirement 1.5 - Notifiable Pest Interceptions or Outbreaks	Date completed

References

5 Whys

The five Whys is the practice of asking why repeatedly whenever a problem is encountered in order to get beyond the obvious symptoms to discover the root cause.

Without repeatedly asking why, managers would simply solve the direct cause rather than the root cause and the failure may recur. The specific number five is not the point. Rather it is to keep asking until the root cause is reached and eliminated.

[Link to the Lean Enterprise Institute description of the '5 whys' process.](#)