

Australian Prawn Farm White Spot Disease Recovery Levy

During December 2016 - March 2017, White Spot Disease was detected on all prawn farms in the Logan Region of SE Qld.

Based on agreement in early 2017, APFA facilitated the final agreement between industry, Queensland Government, and Commonwealth Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR), and all WSD affected farms were closed for the 2016-17 season and a further fallow season was implemented for the 2017-18 season.

In April 2017 DAWR confirmed a support package of \$20 million would be paid directly to prawn farms impacted by WSD. These funds have since been released to relevant farms.

As part of the agreement, the national prawn farming industry will repay \$4.0 million to Federal Government for the WSD support package. This repayment will be undertaken over a 9-10 year period from 1 July 2019, based on a compulsory levy payable by all active commercial prawn farms.

The design of the proposed compulsory WSD Recovery Levy will be as follows:

1. the basis for the WSD repayment levy will be cents per kg of total prawn aquaculture production, the same base as the existing prawn RD&E levy,
2. payment of the levy will be compulsory across all prawn aquaculture production (regardless of export and domestic sales) by all active prawn farms,
3. based on recent industry investments and advice, over the next decade the forecast production growth in the prawn aquaculture industry will be significant (up ~250%),
4. total funds to be raised by the levy is \$4.0 million,
5. the nominal term of the levy will be ten years, but repayment is conservatively scheduled over a 9 year period, commencing 1 July 2019 through to 30 June 2028,
6. a mid-term review of the progress of the levy will be undertaken by APFA/FRDC in 2024-25 and adjustments made as necessary,
7. the levy rate proposed to enable this payment is 3.01c/kg of harvested commercial prawns.