

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry - ATSE Crawford Fund Master Class in Agricultural Biosecurity

Sydney and Canberra, 14–26 September 2003



Participants of the class at a reception held in Federal Parliament House, Canberra.

From left to right are: Asna Booty Othman (Malaysia), Dr Elly Sudiana (Indonesia), Neil Inall (Crawford Fund and Class Facilitator), Dr Noeri Widowati (Indonesia), Alejandra Elizalde (Mexico).

In September 2003, the **Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry** and **The ATSE Crawford Fund** collaborated to present a Master Class in Agricultural Biosecurity, in Sydney and Canberra.

Feedback from course participants, presenters and organisers indicates that the Master Class was a resounding success.

The **Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry** is the Australian Government agency responsible for Australia's agricultural, fisheries, forestry and food industries and the natural resource base upon which these industries rely. Within the Department, Biosecurity Australia is responsible for developing biosecurity policy, and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) is responsible for quarantine operations.

This was the twenty seventh Master Class to have been conducted by **The ATSE Crawford Fund** since 1992.

The Master Class was attended by 23 invited participants from Argentina, Chile, the People's Republic of China, East Timor, the Fiji Islands, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

The participants were predominantly senior quarantine officials with experience in animal and plant biosecurity.

The program aimed to:

- increase participants' understanding of the management of biosecurity risks associated with international trade
- provide opportunities to share experiences in the ways countries can exercise their rights and implement their obligations under the World Trade Organization's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (the SPS Agreement)
- describe the steps involved in import risk analysis
- promote adoption of improved biosecurity systems, policies and procedures
- demonstrate the quarantine systems used in Australia.

Class activities were largely interactive, with short presentations from experts, followed by vigorous discussion. The program covered the following major topics:

- The Australian Agricultural Scene
- The International Biosecurity Framework
- Biosecurity in Australia
- Pre-Border Theory and Practice and Risk Analysis
- Border Theory and Practice
- Post-Border Theory and Practice
- The Role of Computers and Databases in Biosecurity
- Technical Market Access

Activities also included visits to Sydney's seaport and international airport, the Eastern Creek Quarantine Facility and the Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute to view quarantine operations in action.

In Canberra, the participants attended the two-day Quarantine and Market Access Conference (QMAC), the theme of which was *Maximising Trade — Minimising Risk*. QMAC highlighted the challenges for government and industry in managing biological risks in agricultural trade. By bringing together policy makers, scientists, researchers and industry leaders, this conference provided an opportunity to hear first-hand about Australia's science-based quarantine policy, developments in the World Trade Organization, and emerging trade issues.