

## Biosecurity measures in place for South Australian tomato producers

The Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit Virus (ToBRV) has recently been discovered in South Australia and we are providing the following note to address the current impact on our investments and the broader industry.

### Background

The virus was first detected in Australia in August 2024 and causes yellowing and deformity on the leaves of the host plants, while the crop itself can form wrinkled spots and show uneven ripening. Affected tomatoes are safe to eat but the virus is highly transmissible among tomatoes, capsicums and chillies.

The tomato virus was first detected in the Middle East in 2014 and spread across Europe, China, Mexico and the USA.

While the initial response to the ToBRV outbreak has involved heightened biosecurity measures and strong trade restrictions, we are closely monitoring the situation, and at this stage none of our tenants have tested positive to the virus. Our tenants, alongside government agencies and industry bodies, are actively working together to contain the virus and minimise disruptions.

The response to this outbreak mirrors the experiences of Europe and America, where initial stringent restrictions were gradually replaced by more pragmatic and risk-based approaches. For instance, the USDA has allowed ToBRV-positive tomatoes to be sold, focusing on preventing the spread through plant materials while maintaining trade.

### Actions taken by the Australian government

The Australian government has taken swift action. The Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland governments have issued control orders and movement restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus from South Australia.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia (PIRSA) is leading the response by strictly quarantining infected properties and conducting extensive surveillance. It is now five weeks since its discovery and there is still a belief from Plant Health Australia that the virus can be eradicated completely. The virus remains contained to only one production facility, which we do not own and two propagation nurseries in South Australia, which we also do not own.

The virus originated in seeds used by the two propagation facilities, whose seedlings were then supplied to the 40-hectare glasshouse facility in Two Wells, South Australia, operated by Perfection Fresh. This 40-hectare glasshouse facility has been shut down by the PIRSA, resulting in approximately 500 job losses. The loss of supply is expected to increase the cost of tomatoes in the supermarkets.

### Centuria's response

We own two glasshouse facilities in South Australia which represent approximately 23% of the Fund's income. The 20-hectare Sundrop facility is reasonably isolated as it is located in Port Augusta, but the 6-hectare Comfresh facility is approximately 15km from the Perfection Fresh glasshouse that has been shut down by the PIRSA.

Our tenants are some of the most sophisticated operators in the industry and are implementing global best biosecurity practices. They are working closely with biosecurity experts to ensure strict sanitation protocols, equipment disinfection and controlled movement of personnel. These measures align with those proven effective in other countries, ensuring the safety of their operations and mitigating financial impact.

We remain confident that the coordinated actions between our tenants, government bodies and industry stakeholders will ensure minimal disruption, and we will continue to keep you updated on any significant developments should they arise.