

Australia commits \$2M grants to support Indigenous farm business

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The Australian Government is supporting innovative First Nations business opportunities that strengthen biosecurity in Northern Australia with the announcement of four recipients of the Biosecurity Business Grants. Biosecurity in northern Australia underpins development and protects Australia from the threat of pests and diseases that could devastate our agricultural industries.

Nearly \$2 million had been committed through the grants to support Indigenous business, economic and employment opportunities delivering biosecurity outcomes in Northern Australia.

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This is the second round of funding under the Biosecurity Business Grants Program. Five projects were approved for funding under Round 1 in August 2021 totaling over \$2.4 million over two years (2021-22 and 2022-23).

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Murray Watt said “These recipients have received some much-needed funding to support their innovative business ideas which will contribute to strengthening the biosecurity system. Supported initiatives include the northern Australia Aboriginal Kakadu Plum Alliance Cooperative Limited establishing an insect monitoring network amongst Aboriginal bushfood producers in the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia, and

Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation Pty Ltd leading the co-design and delivery of a community awareness program about biosecurity in the Torres Strait.

Northern Territory business Deadly Hair Dude Pty Ltd will establish a horticultural micro-business in the remote community of Gunbalanya, Northern Territory which will support long-term, sustainable employment and build important biosecurity surveillance skills.

And Yagbani Aboriginal Corporation will lead a project to manage climate-change driven pathogen biosecurity threats in the north using co-designed, hands-on workshops and traditional knowledge to build new skills in early warning surveillance and response.

“First Nations people are inseparable from stewardship of country, making them uniquely placed to identify and respond to the exotic pests, weeds and diseases which threaten Australia’s environment and agricultural industries. The Australian Government is committed to backing the capabilities and innovative ideas that empower that partnership” said Minister Murry.