

# Blitzing your household bugs in the name of biosecurity

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“We’re expecting we’ll see a lot of the normal pantry pests, like grain weevils [*Sitophilus granarius*], cigarette beetles [*Lasioderma serricorne*], Indian meal moths [*Plodia interpunctella*]...” she says. Credit: Mariusz KASIO

[Sign up](#) for your free pantry trap, discover what happens in your pantry after dark, and you'll also help Australia's biosecurity.

"[Pantry Blitz](#) is a giant [citizen science project](#), and it's all about engaging people in the community to help collect surveillance data for us," says Department of Agriculture and Food WA's Dr Rosalie McCauley.

With the aid of insect-attracting lures, the project will generate up to 3000 surveillance reports each week, submitted by everyday pantry-owners across WA.

These reports are vital, as they play a significant role in maintaining the state's biosecurity status.

"DAFWA use these reports to compile data used to demonstrate that WA is free from exotic [pests](#)," says Dr McCauley.

"That allows us to sell our grain into premium overseas markets. We get a better price for our grain, and it's better for everyone."

## **Here's how it works**

If (or when) your pantry trap catches a creepy-crawly, you send in its picture using the free MyPestGuide Reporter app.

"We'll identify the bug, then send that identification back to you," Dr McCauley says.

The team will compile all bug-sightings and publish community results on the Pantry Blitz site.

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What they're not expecting are invasive exotic pests, the kind that might sneak in from overseas to drastically impact Australian agriculture.

WA's grain exports bring in more than \$4 billion in to the state each year, which is why Dr McCauley says biosecurity is everyone's business.

Of the 202 grain-related pests on the MyPestGuide Crops app, 55 live in stored grains.

"They're all the sort of pests you might find in your pantry," says Dr McCauley.

## Negative reports too, please

If your trap comes up empty, that's fantastic, and worth photographing too, "because that's a negative report," Dr McCauley says.

"That's another dot on the map where we can say, no, we don't have those nasty pests."

Pantry Blitz is the latest in a series of DAFWA citizen science projects, including the 2015 Biosecurity Blitz.

"This year we're targeting community resource centres, and getting people registering from the regions," Dr McCauley says.

"If we've got a geographic spread of people out looking and sending us reports, we've got the best possible chance of finding new pests early."

Pantry Blitz is supported as part of National Science Week. To participate, register for your free pantry trap soon.

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Provided by Science Network WA

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