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2006 ANNUAL MEETING Milwaukee, Wisconsin

RESOLUTION NO. 2

DIAGNOSTIC SUPPORT AND INCREASED FUNDING FOR COOPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PEST SURVEY (CAPS)

The Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) Program is a combined effort by Federal and State agricultural organizations to conduct surveillance, detection, and monitoring of agricultural crop pests and biological control agents. CAPS is tasked with (1) detection of exotic pests before they become well established through survey and identification activities in the field and laboratory, (2) collection and management of survey data for state-level databases and a national electronic and exchange system and database-the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS).

Recent enhancements in the CAPS Program have substantially improved pest survey and detection activities at both the state and regional levels. With these program enhancements, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of samples and screening activities needed for rapid response. The significant increase in the volume of samples, coupled with the corresponding target pest diversity, have triggered the need for personnel dedicated to screening samples, identification of qualified private taxonomic and diagnostic resources and development of identifier staff needed to serve states and the USDA, APHIS, PPQ. At the present time, CAPS Program staff is canvassing State Survey Coordinators to identify those surveys requiring taxonomic support and expected number of samples across the nation. Screening, diagnostic, and taxonomic support serve as critical components in early pest detection of invasive plant pests and in the initiation of a rapid response needed to mitigate their impact and formulate eradication plans.

CAPS program activities continue to play critical roles in the survey and detections of several noteworthy exotic plant pests. During a 2005 Florida CAPS initiative, a targeted huanglongbing or citrus greening survey in Miami-Dade County found two citrus trees in separate locations showing symptoms of this fatal citrus disease. The Swede midge, a serious pest of crucifers, was detected in New York in 2004 through a CAPS survey. In 2005, a single sirex woodwasp was identified in a sample collected as part of the New York State CAPS National Exotic Wood Borer and Bark Beetle Survey. In 2006, CAPS reported the detection of Plum Pox Virus in New York and Michigan and the detection of Potato Cyst Nematode in Idaho. These early detections are essential to successful mitigation of the damages by these new exotic pests.

Inadequate funding limits the effectiveness of the CAPS program both at the state and national levels. Of the current program funding level of \$27 million, states receive approximately \$5 million which is sufficient only to support limited staff and several small scale programs. However, increased funding levels have been shown to result in early detection successes.

RESOLVED by the National Plant Board at its annual meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on Wednesday, August 16, 2006, that USDA, APHIS, PPQ, in collaboration with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), secure funding necessary to implement the recommendations found in the *Safeguarding American Plant Resources (1999) Report*. These recommendations include the following:

- ▶ Dedicate a National Identification System (NIS) staff position to coordinate taxonomic support for domestic programs and to establish a virtual lab linking existing NIS diagnostic resources with available expertise outside of NIS for domestic study.
- ▶ Augment the NIS diagnostic system in order to provide a virtual clearinghouse for specimen to be identified.
- ▶ Contract with external specialists, via cooperative agreements, to provide their services for confirmation of species that are not readily categorized by National Invasive Plant Pest Laboratory staff.
- ▶ Utilize highly competent taxonomists and systematists from a variety of institutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Plant Board requests that USDA, APHIS, PPQ evaluate and increase the funding for the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Program. A minimum or core level of funding of at least 40% of the pest detection line item should be allocated to all states willing to participate, with additional funding to be allocated based on a state-level pest introduction risk analysis to conduct critical surveys. This analysis should consider number of international seaports, airports, import agricultural commodity tonnage, foreign visitor traffic, and other relevant pathway data, including climate and host plant availability, that occurs in each state.

Motion by: Gene Cross, Chair, Resolutions/Policy Committee
Seconded by: Bob Mungari, NY Member

Distribution:

Honorable Michael Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture, USDA
Dr. Chuck Lambert, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Program, USDA
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Dr. Richard Dunkle, Deputy Administrator, USDA, APHIS, PPQ
Vic Harabin, Eastern Regional Director, USDA, APHIS, PPQ
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