



SOUTHERN PLANT BOARD

April 9-12, 2006

Savannah, Georgia

RESOLUTION No. 6

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IMPORTED FIRE ANTS IN PINE STRAW

The USDA-APHIS-PPQ has enacted regulations to minimize the artificial spread of the Imported Fire Ant, *Solenopsis invicta*, to parts of the United States not already infested. The regulations address movement of soil, plants and plant material, hay, sod and soil moving equipment. However, the movement of pine straw from infested areas is not regulated. On January 2004, USDA-APHIS-PPQ issued an industry alert publication entitled "Pine Straw Retailers Protect Your Employees and Customers". Within this publication are comments concerning how pine straw has been documented to harbor imported fire ant populations. This publication also notes the movement of pine straw from fire ant infested areas is currently not regulated.

Furthermore, the movement and use of pine straw as a mulching material has become increasingly popular outside the fire ant regulated areas. In addition, there have been several incidences of Imported Fire Ant infestations in pine straw in the southeastern United States, both within and outside the current fire ant distribution. Reviewing these facts, gives just cause for expanding the current imported fire ant regulations to include pine straw.

RESOLVED by the Southern Plant Board at its annual meeting held in Savannah, Georgia, on April 12, 2006, that the USDA-APHIS-PPQ consider amending the current Imported Fire Ant regulations to include pine straw as a regulated article. Pine straw should be required to be handled in a manner to preclude infestation during storage.

Motion to Adopt: Tomm Johnson

Seconded by: Mike Evans

Distribution:

Honorable Michael Johanns, Secretary of Agriculture, USDA

Dr. Chuck Lambert, Acting Under Secretary, USDA

Dr. Ron DeHaven, Administrator, USDA-APHIS

Dr. Richard Dunkle, Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Vic Harabin, Eastern Regional Director, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Phil Garcia, Western Regional Director, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Rick Kirchhoff, CEO, NASDA

Gus Douglass, NASDA Animal and Plant Industries Committee

Bob Ehart, NASDA

Craig Regelbrugge, American Nursery and Landscape Association

Ken Rauscher, President National Plant Board

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