

2026 Southern Plant Board Meeting Agenda



Monday, May 4

4:00 pm – 7:00 pm **Registration** (Foyer)

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm **Southern Plant Board Reception** (The Tunnel)

Dinner (on your own)

Tuesday, May 5

(General Session Rooms will be in Ballroom B)

Session moderator: TBD

7:00 am – 8:00 am **Breakfast (provided)** (Ballroom A)
Registration (Foyer)

8:00 am – 8:15 am **Southern Plant Board Opening Session**

- **Call to Order:** Steven Long – SPB President
- **Roll Call:** Mark Stoll – SPB Secretary-Treasurer
- **General Meeting Announcements:** Tina Peltier, LA Department of Agriculture and Forestry

8:15 am – 8:30 am **Opening Comments**

Steven Long, SPB President

8:30 am – 9:00 am **Welcome to Louisiana**
Dr. Mike Strain, Commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry

9:00 am – 10:00 am **Agency Reports**

- **National Plant Board,**
Dan Kenny, NPB Vice President, Ohio Department of Agriculture
- **Customs and Border Protection,**
Kendall P. Gaines, Agricultural Operations Manager, CBP
- **USDA-APHIS-PPQ Update**
Nicole Russo, Acting ADA Field Operations, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
- **Horticultural Inspection Society – Southern Chapter**
Elizabeth “Randi” Balog, Georgia Department of Agriculture, President HISSC

- 10:00 am – 10:20 am **Break (door prizes)**
- 10:20 am – 10:40 am **Yellow Legged Hornet Update & Federal Response**
David Williams, GA Department of Agriculture
Steven Long, Clemson Department of Plant Industry
Josie Ryan, National Operations Manager, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
- 10:40 am – 11:40 am **Two Spot Cotton Leafhopper – Industry Perspective**
Kamron Newberry, Regulatory & Trade Policy Coordinator, AmericanHort
Chad Brewer or Savana Denton, National Cotton Council
Dr. David Kerns, AgriLife Extension, TX
Dr. James Villegas, Assistant Professor, LSU
- 11:40 am – 12:00 pm **Crawfish Production and Impacts of Apple Snail**
Todd Fontenot, Extension Agent, LSU
- 12:00 am – 1:00 pm **Lunch (provided) (Ballroom A)**

Session moderator: TBD
- 1:00 pm – 1:20 pm **New Pests – USDA Perspective**
Nichole Carrier, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
- 1:20 pm – 1:40 pm **Cotton Boll Weevil Program – Updates**
Chad Brewer or Savana Denton, National Cotton Council
- 1:40 pm – 5:00 pm **CAPS Breakout Sessions (SSCs & PSSs) (Governor Room)**
State Survey Coordinators will meet with Pest Survey Specialists to update each other on the 2026 CAPS Program and updates. Carrie Croy-Owen (PPQ) and Darrell Bays (PPQ) will be in attendance to provide federal updates on the CAPS Program.
- 1:40 pm – 2:10 pm **State Reports – AL, AR & KY (10 minutes w/slides)**
 - Regulatory updates
 - New Pest Finds
 - Noteworthy numbers or Personnel changes
 - Other items of significance
- 2:10 pm – 2:40 pm **Citrus Pests Updates**
Dr. Greg Hodges/Dr. Trevor Smith, FL Dept. of Ag & Consumer Services
Dr. Awinash Bhatkar, TX Dept. of Ag
Mike Evans, GA Dept. of Ag
Brittaney Allen, AL Dept. of Ag & Industries
- 2:40 pm – 3:00 pm **Citrus Regulation Task Force – Progress and Update for 2026**
Leo Donovall, National Operations Manager, PPQ
- 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm **State Reports – LA, FL & GA (10 minutes w/slides)**
 - Regulatory updates
 - New Pest Finds
 - Noteworthy numbers or Personnel changes
 - Other items of significance

- 3:30 pm – 3:50 pm **Break (door prizes)**
- 3:50 pm – 4:20 pm **State Reports – MS, NC, & OK (10 minutes w/slides)**
- Regulatory updates
 - New Pest Finds
 - Noteworthy numbers or Personnel changes
 - Other items of significance
- 4:20 pm – 5:00 pm **State Reports Cont. – SC, TN, TX, & VA (10 minutes w/slides)**
- Regulatory updates
 - New Pest Finds
 - Noteworthy numbers or Personnel changes
 - Other items of significance
- 5:00 pm **End general meeting – Next Day Announcements**
- 5:00 pm – 5:30 pm **SPRO/SPHD (ONLY) Roundtable & Discussion**
 Opportunity for attending SPROs and SPHDs to problem solve, address programmatic issues, or regional challenges.
- Dinner (on your own)**
- Wednesday, May 6** **(General Session Rooms will be in Ballroom B)**
- 7:00 am – 8:00 am **Breakfast (provided)** (Ballroom A)
- Session moderator: TBD*
- 8:00 am – 8:20 am **SANC Update**
 Joy Goforth, NCDACS, SPB Rep on SANC Governing Board
- 8:20 am – 8:40 am **ARC Committee Update – Progress on Current Regulatory Alternatives**
 Kenny Naylor, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture and Forestry
- 8:40 am – 9:00 am **Cooperative Agreement Updates**
 Carrie Croy-Owen, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
- 9:00 am – 9:20 am **Weed Free Certification Program**
 Bill Foote, NCDACS, Co-Chair of North American Invasive Species Management Association's (NAISMA) Weed Free Products Committee
- 9:20 am – 9:50 am **Sugarcane Production, Pests Pressures, and Products**
 Kenneth Gravois, Sugarcane Specialist, LSU
 Olivia Stewart, Oxbow Rum Distillery
- 9:50 am – 10:10 am **Sweet Potato Weevil Regulatory Workplan Update**
 Joy Goforth, NCDACS
- 10:10 am – 10:25 am **BREAK**

- 10:25 am – 11:00 am **Pest Risk Committee: Importance of Collaboration and Fostering Cooperation Between State and Federal Agencies**
Chad Wetzel, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
Joeseph Bravata, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
Brittaney Allen, AL Dept. of Ag & Industries
Kendall Gaines, CBP
- 11:00 am – 11:20 am **Rice Pests**
Dr. Blake Wilson, Associate Professor, LSU
- 11:20 am – 11:40 am **Box Tree Moth – Response & Quarantine**
Dylan Lockwood, SSC, VDACS
- 11:40 am – 12:00 pm **Summary of 2026 Meeting and Announcement of 2027 location Field Trip Notes**
Steven Long, Tina Peltier, Awinash Bhatkar
- 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **LUNCH** – Provided
- 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm **Louisiana Farm Production Tour and Dinner – Four Oaks Farm**
Meeting attendees will take a bus to visit a local Louisiana farm in Morganza, Louisiana to learn about their crop system, including crawfish, rice, cattle, soybeans, and sugarcane. Attendees will learn about pest challenges, crop rotation cycles with integrated pest management, and other unique farm practices. Attendees will also be provided with dinner as a part of the tour. Additional information on the tour will be provided in the invitation letter.

Dinner (provided during the tour)

Thursday, May 7

- 7:00 am – 8:00 am **Breakfast (provided)** (Ballroom A)
Registration (Foyer)
- 8:00 am – 12:00 pm **Breakout Sessions**
- SPB Business Meeting (Ballroom B) – Steven Long (lead)
 - CBP (Paramount/King) – Kendall Gaines (lead)
 - CAPS Breakout Session (Governor) – Matt Howle (lead)
 - APHIS PPQ Breakout Session (Capitol) – Nicole Russo (lead)
- 10:00 am – 10:15 am **Break**
- 10:15 am – 12:00 pm **Breakout Sessions**
- SPB Business Meeting (Ballroom B)
 - CBP (Paramount/King)
 - CAPS Breakout Session (Governor)
 - APHIS PPQ Breakout Session (Capitol)
- 12:00 pm **Conclude/Adjournment**