



Strategic Alliance Strategic Initiative (SASI) Closeout White Paper Template

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In early 2023, the Strategic Alliance committee, made up by members representing Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) and the National Plant Board (NPB), identified new domestic detections of significance as a strategic initiative to address during fiscal year (FY) 2023. Detection of pests known not to occur in the United States or of pests with limited distribution detected in new areas is of utmost concern to PPQ and to impacted U.S. states. Any new detection requires prompt evaluation, response, and communication between PPQ and state's counterpart. However, at times these processes become complicated because of uncertainty as to what is a 'significant' pest or not, and who needs to know and when. To ensure that the simultaneous communication protocol in place for the notification of official plant pest identification results remains relevant to PPQ and the NPB, a team of PPQ and NPB representatives was tasked with: (1) defining what is a notification pause and criteria for placing a notification on hold; and (2) updating PPQ's Plant Pest Identification Notifications to State Departments of Agriculture (Adopted March 21, 2008; Amended February 22, 2019) protocol to clarify what is a notification pause, and criteria that PPQ would consider when placing a notification on pause.

This team met several times and during the summer of FY 2023, the team forwarded the updated document, which included the definition and criteria for a notification pause, to the PPQ management team (PPQ-MT) and to the NPB executive board and presented the updates during the NPB Annual meeting. Shortly after, the PPQ-MT tasked the team with: (1) updating the Plant Protection and Quarantine Protocol for Simultaneous Communication with State Plant Health Directors and State Plant Regulatory Officials document; and (2) developing best practices for the sharing of notification results among NPB members. The team met several times between March and May 2024 and updated the PPQ simultaneous communication protocol. The NPB members drafted the NPB's Communication Protocol for New Pest Detections of Significance in Response to an APHIS-PPQ issued Notification Pause and shared it with PPQ members in the team.

Outcomes/Deliverables:

The team accomplished the following:

1. Finalized a definition for notification pause: A **notification pause** is a PPQ internal process that creates time to evaluate the potential impacts of the detection, align proper actions, and establish communications with impacted state(s).
2. Identified sequential criteria for a notification pause: Is this a select agent? Is this a priority pest, quarantine pest, or uncategorized pest? Is the pest new to the United States, a state, or area within a state? Are there significant industry or trade impacts?



3. Updated the PPQ document: **Official Notification of Plant Pest Identifications to State Departments of Agriculture, Adopted March 21, 2008, Amended February 22, 2019, Amended May 17, 2024**
4. Updated the PPQ protocol: **Plant Protection and Quarantine Protocol for Simultaneous Communication with State Plant Health Directors and State Plant Regulatory Officials**
5. Created new NPB best practices: **NPB's Communication Protocol for New Pest Detections of Significance in Response to an APHIS-PPQ issued Notification Pause**

The team forwarded completed documents to the PPQ-MT and NPB executive board, and thus, has completed assigned tasks.