

March 15, 2024 Board Report

Division of Plant Health and Compliance



Division Overview/Program Updates

- **Plant Pathology**

- Plant Pathology Program received \$85,007 from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program. The funding is for the annual survey and monitoring of destructive plant diseases in Nevada.
- Plant Pathology Lab detected '*Candidatus*' Phytoplasma pruni, a bacterial pathogen causing X-disease in stone fruit. X-disease is a common but destructive disease, and this is the second time we have detected it in Nevada.

- **Seed**

- Demand for source identification inspections increased significantly for the past native seed collection season: a total of 171 sites and 71 different species were inspected and admitted. This represents a 38% increase from the previous season.
- The National Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA) conducted an in-person audit to the seed lab. This audit aims to improve seed certification and seed testing.
- 2023 seed potato winter grow-out trials were completed. Over 3500 potato tubers (4 varieties) were planted and tested for both mosaic and leaf roll viruses to determine the eligibility of potato tubers for seed use according to seed potato certification standards. One variety grow out resulted in minor potato leaf roll with an infection rate that will disqualify it from certification next year.
- Seed program staff participated in the Annual Society for Range Management (SRM) Conference and presented on the Department's role within the Nevada Native Seed Partnership (NNSP), informing attendees on program services and upcoming opportunities for native seed users in Nevada.

- **Chemistry**

- Chemistry laboratory will host 2024 National Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Pesticide Laboratory Analyst Training between April 29th to May 3, 2024, at the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) headquarters in Sparks. This project is to conduct specialized laboratory training with a focus on providing information, tips and techniques that will be useful to state and tribal pesticide laboratory analysts in analyzing and reporting pesticide regulatory compliance and enforcement samples collected under Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, And Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) cooperative agreements and performance partnership agreements with United States EPA.

- **Hemp**

- This program is in the process to get initial assessment on site for the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 accreditation. The initial accreditation assessment will be conducted soon.
- Sample analyses summary;

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Total Samples Analyzed – Fiscal Year (FY) 2024	
Type of Sample	11/9/2023 to Present
Ground/Surface Water (Pesticide Residue Monitor Program)	6
HEMP (Percentage Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) analysis)	32
Pesticide Formulation / Use Dilution	40
Pesticide Residue (EPA Enforcement)	5

- **Noxious Weed Program** (Reporting is for FY 2024; November 19th – February 13th)
 - Regulatory actions
 - The NDA noxious weed team plans to begin following up on regulatory outreach in Spring 2024. Spring Creek area in Elko County is still a big focus for regulatory efforts but southern Nevada is also planned to be a priority this year.
 - Regulatory letters issued **210**
 - Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)
 - Monthly training for NDOT engineers and contractors is being provided monthly and quarterly trainings are scheduled to begin in April 2024. Review of noxious weed has slowed but is expected to increase again as projects start in late Spring and Summer.
 - NDOT Weed Plans Reviewed **20**
 - NDOT Weed Plans Approved **20**
 - NDOT Project Sites Visited **17**
 - Weed Free
 - Weed Free Certificates Issued **37**
 - Weed Free Gravel Inspections **31**
 - Weed Free Forage Inspections **14**
 - Weed Free Mulch Inspections **2**
 - Biological Control
 - The NDA biological control program did begin rearing efforts to increase the availability of Russian knapweed agent *Jaapillea ivannikovi* in the state. NDA noxious weed staff will be attending the 2024 National Forum on Biological Control and will be hosting a spring Nevada weed biocontrol partner meeting in 2024.
 - Weed Biocontrol Monitoring **42**
 - Weed Biocontrol Releases **26**
 - Biocontrol Collections **2**
 - Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS)

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- The number of verifications is expected to increase significantly in February as NDA noxious weed staff review recent bulk uploads that were submitted by the National Park Service and Bureau of Land management.
- EDDMapS Identifications **23**
- EDDMapS Verifications **511**
- Nevada’s Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) Plan
 - Continuing to move forward with Nevada’s EDRR plan NDA noxious weed team will host the state meeting in February and regional meetings in March.
- Outreach and Education
 - Partners are continuing to request NDA noxious weed staff participation and presentations at trainings, workshops, and seminars.
 - The NDA noxious weed team has participated in **16** events for FY24.
- **Pesticide Program**
 - Online Training – New License Renewal Option
 - Pesticide staff are exploring another option for pest control license renewal. Currently, licensees are required to acquire 6 continuing education units (CEU). If this requirement is not fulfilled, the licensee is then required to take the original examination. NDA staff are proposing a third option. This third option would streamline renewal for licensees who did not complete the CEU requirements prior to the end of the license year. The team is working on an online training class administered by NDA that could allow applicators who did not meet CEU requirements to show competency as required by state and EPA regulation and relicense within 1-2 days, rather than weeks.
- **Annual Project with United States Geological Survey (USGS)**
 - In conjunction with the United States Geological Survey (USGS), NDA staff will be conducting a surface water sampling project along the Virginia River from March to April 2024. Polar Organic Chemical Integrated Sampling (POCIS) filters will be deployed at 3 different locations. The POCIS filters are deployed, extracted after 1 month, and the filter is sent to the laboratory for pesticide analysis. POCIS provides a time-weighted average of contaminants rather than results taken from an instantaneous sample.
- **Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (SETT)**
 - Skyler Monaghan joined SETT in January, after the position has been vacant. His previous work included: program management, outreach, and project implementation of conservation projects in Nevada. While at the Tahoe Fund, his role consisted largely of grant funding projects in the Lake Tahoe basin, and handling outreach to ensure relationships with donors and state/federal agencies. While working at the Carson Valley Conservation district, he acted as the crew supervisor in the implementation of a noxious weed program, as well as restoration projects to repair riparian areas throughout the Carson Valley.

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- The NDA’s role on the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team will be as the Credit Projects lead. Time has largely been devoted to learning the role and becoming familiar with the Conservation Credit System as a whole. In January, the SETT hosted the one and two-day verifier training.
- **Specialty Crops**
 - Specialty Crop Block Grant
 - This program allocates funds to each state to support education, research, and promotion projects that will ultimately increase the production, consumption, and distribution of specialty crops (sole-proprietorships are not eligible). We received 13 applications; application review and awards are scheduled for February/March of 2024.
 - Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) Trainings
 - Crops program has scheduled FSMA trainings starting in March through June where we will cover different topics every other week including Producer Certificate Application, Introduction to Food Safety, Farm Safety, Traceability, Hydroponics, Composting, Eggs, Microgreens, Mushrooms, etc.
 - Export/Phytosanitary Inspections
 - At the beginning of 2024 we received a request for potato export phytosanitary inspections that are going to Mexico. We started inspections at the end of January, and these will be ongoing for the next 5-7 weeks ending in March/April 2024.
 - The Onion Shipping season is nearing its end with approximately 2.5 months remaining depending on supply and shipping volumes. The department currently has 4 agriculturists certified as onion inspectors.

The table below shows the monthly breakdown of onions exported FY 2024

Month	2023 Pounds Shipped Outside USA	2024 Pounds Shipped Outside USA
November	1,091,010	962,470
December	1,054,225	697,200
January	1,138,964	624,110
February	485,800	0

* Onion pounds are as of January 31, 2024

- Phytosanitary Certificate numbers have changed compared to the same period of previous year. The pound certified has shown some variation month to month compared to FY 2023, and the total number of certificates has increased in this quarter compared to FY 2023. To date the number of certificates issued is nearing the total number of certificates issued for the previous year and will likely surpass it by the fiscal year end.

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Month	2023 Certifications Issued	2023 Pounds Certified	2024 Certifications Issued	2024 Pounds Certified
November	49	8,937,081	65	14,021,478
December	21	8,047,920	48	4,396,231
January	23	3,259,669	57	11,029,309
February	26	4,189,289	0	0

* FY24 data accurate through January 31, 2024

- Hemp
 - In the second quarter (Q2) of State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024, the NDA conducted a total of 5 hemp sample inspections and 1 site compliance inspection. For the 2nd quarter of SFY 2024, hemp inspections yielded 9 hemp samples, of which 5 (55%) samples exceeded the acceptable THC threshold. Three of the 5 samples that tested above compliance were remediated, which brought those samples into compliance. As of December 31, 2023, the NDA has conducted a total of 5 hemp sampling inspections and 1 site compliance inspection.
- **Entomology**
 - Entomology received two Specialty Crop Block Grants for outreach and survey of invasive species.
 - The entomology team conducted two hands on invasive species workshops; one in Sparks and one in Las Vegas.
 - The State Entomologist presented at the first Northern Nevada Invasive Species Conference in Ely and at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE) Green Industry Training in Sparks.
 - Attended the National Grasshopper Management Board meeting in Denver Colorado. The State Entomologist serves as Vice Chairman of the organization.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Number</u>
Grasshopper/Mormon Cricket stops	1210
Palm Weevil Commodities	1
Palm pest survey	1
Asian Defoliator Surveys	1
Khapra Beetle Surveys	1
CAPS Infrastructure	1
CAPS Exotic Wood Borer	1
CAPS Gypsy Moth	1

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CAPS Pine Shoot Beetle	1
CAPS Imported Fire Ant	1
Traps placed/surveyed	4859
Identification Specimens	359
Identification Emails	52
Identifications Text	63
Identification Phone	2
Education	3883
Treatments	80
Japanese Beetle Survey	1
European Corn Borer survey	0
State quarantine survey	0
Survey ID	71100
Collection processing	18250
Honeybee Surveys	30
General collection/collecting	60