



March 1, 2007
Winter newsletter

THE AG LINE

The following provides a brief summary of activities conducted by the Nevada Department of Agriculture. It is not a complete listing of all Department activities, but rather highlights some of the more significant accomplishments. If you have questions concerning these or other Department activities, please feel free to contact the respective Division Administrator. Also, if you desire to receive this monthly report by e-mail, please send your name, e-mail address, and an indication of this preference to ndoa@agri.state.nv.us.

Pest Control Operator Program

Continuing Education:

On January 4, 2007 Scott Cichowlaz attended the Nevada Pest Control Association's January meeting held in Henderson, NV. He answered the association's questions regarding the NDOA.

Scott continued updating the 2007 CEU & PC Company database with all the licensees who will need CEUs to renew their licenses in 2008.

Greg Hymas represented the department at a continuing education seminar presented by Target Specialties in Las Vegas on January 25, 2007. Approximately 200 pest control operators & principals attended the event which offered six continuing education hours.

Certification

As the renewals are processed, the Restricted Use Pesticide Certification database is also updated to reflect the new expiration dates of all the Primary Principals who are certified to purchase, use and supervise the use of RUP's.

On January 31, 2007, Scott Cichowlaz and Jay Steele started processing the Certification Exams from the Las Vegas school. This process came to an abrupt halt when the computer being used to run the Scantron failed. An old computer (with WIN 95 and with a Pentium II or LOWER processor) was found and will be programmed to process the exams starting February 1, 2007.

The Las Vegas Certification School was held January 25 & 26, 2007. Due to an overwhelming response to this school, Scott Cichowlaz and Chuck Moses are planning a mini-certification school for March 15 & 16, 2007. This school will focus on the correct use of Avitrol (a flocking alarm pesticide) and other vertebrate pest control. The reason for this additional school is that 40 or so individuals were turned away from the January session.

Structural Inspections

Greg Hymas conducted four inspections regarding pre-construction treatments in new housing developments. Two were final grade inspections, one

was an extensive record audit, and one was a horizontal soil treatment inspection.

Ten soil samples were collected, 2 samples of termiticides were collected, and 14 documentary samples were submitted. The soil & termiticide samples were shipped to the department's Reno pesticide laboratory for analysis.

Nursery

Marv Berson completed 18 nursery inspections and 4 truck inspections in January. Truck traffic was light due to the holiday season. He also issued 2 USDA Phytosanitary Certificates involving the export of 750,000 tree seedlings to Canada.

Marc Olson conducted 1 exit inspection, 1 nursery inspection, 1 truck inspection, 3 state phytosanitary certificates and 3 USDA phytosanitary certificates. The cold snap in January that brought freezing temperatures to the Las Vegas valley caused extensive damage to plants in nurseries and around the southern part of the state. Although it looks like it won't be as bad as the 90's freeze which caused millions of dollars in damages, the loss will be in the hundreds of thousand dollars. One nursery in Pahrump lost close to 1,000,000 seedlings, while others have lost thousands of plants. It will probably be late March before the determination can be made as to the extent of the damage.

During the month of January Xenia Duranovic conducted 11 inspections of the nursery stock that was delivered to the Las Vegas valley. Xenia also issued 3 state phytosanitary certificates. Xenia collected payments from 3 unlicensed contractors and processed and issued 18 new licenses. Xenia started surveillance on an unlicensed pest control operator that was conducting pest control under a false name.

Training

Scott Cichowlaz & Chuck Moses continue to update and revise the NDOA Health and Safety manual. Scott finalized the second major revision in early January which addressed several NDOA comments and concerns with our written Health and Safety manual. This second revision was forwarded to Chuck to review. Scott and Chuck will continue the updating process until a final, workable manual is produced.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST**NDOA Produce Inspections:**

24 NDOA Produce Inspections were conducted and 43 Certificates issued for the month of January 2007.

USDA Shell Egg Grading and Poultry Inspection Programs for January:

One lot (445 cases or 18,037.57 lbs.) of USDA Frozen Smoked Turkey Hams were inspected for the School Lunch Poultry Products Program on January 11, 2007.

A damaged portion of the product inspected was written-up on the USDA Destination Condition Examination Report Form and sent to Regional Supervisors in Riverside and Modesto.

Federal Inspections were conducted on 14 lots (1,474/30 dz. cases) of shell eggs destined for Las Vegas casinos, restaurants, delis, and supermarkets. These inspections utilize USDA Grading Standards and Procedures.

*(David T. Walch
Acting Regional Manager - Las Vegas office)*

Reno office Certificates and Shipping Point Inspections - January 2007 (Tisa Halt):**Federal Phytosanitary Certificates**

14 - Hay - shipped to Japan/Taiwan
4 - Onion - shipped to Mexico/Kuwait/United Arab Emirates.

State of Nevada Phytosanitary Certificate

1 - Mushroom Spore - shipped to Japan

Certificates of Free Sale

3 - Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein - shipped to Poland/Russia/Thailand
1 - Soy Protein Powder and Shakes - shipped to Columbia
1 - Soy Sauce Powder - shipped to Germany
2 - CardioGOLD - shipped to Saudi Arabia/State of Qatar

Also listed below are some inspection statistics for January 2007:

David Herrand completed 8 Onion shipping point inspections. The total weight of onions for January 2007 was 388,040 lbs. Jim York inspected 6 Produce shipments for Wal-Mart in order to facilitate shipments into California. Leonard Joy inspected 4 Produce shipments to meet California requirements for the prison.

Meet Caleb Gesick:

Hi my name is Caleb Gesick I am the new receptionist for the Capitol Hill office. I grew up in Carson City, and now I live in Reno with my cat, The Mow. For the past two and a half years I worked at King's Row Pet Hospital, which was a hectic environment. Currently, I am trying to save money to go back to UNR to obtain my bachelor's degree. I am in the middle of a history degree, and when I go back I will also add an education minor.

In August 2006 three staff members from the Nevada Department of Agriculture teamed up with detectives from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department to serve a search warrant at the home of a man suspected of murdering 2 individuals in southern Nevada with a rodenticide ("rat poison"). Because of the NDOA's expertise in the science of pest control and its regulatory responsibility of Nevada's pesticide (i.e. rodenticide) users, the NDOA's investigators were able to discover valuable information that is being used in the case.

Lee Lawrence

Nevada Noxious Weed Program Update:

(Dawn Rafferty and Tina Mudd)

Tina's position as Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) and Weed Free Forage Program Coordinator was made permanent last year and is now funded by a portion of the pesticide registration fees. We now have two people in the state weed program!!

As of 2007 we have 39 weed groups statewide, and at least one in every county.

In 2006 the Weed Free Forage Program certified over 3,000 acres of alfalfa/grass/straw with 18 producers.

We received a \$40,000 grant in 2006 from USDA APHIS and made insect releases on four weed species and purchased collection equipment for the CWMA's.

In January Tina awarded \$141,000 in grant awards from the US Forest Service State and Private Forestry grant program to 15 CWMA's statewide. The US Forest Service also directed an additional \$29,000 to the CWMA program for fire rehabilitation and early detection/rapid response projects.

We were successful in securing funding to hire a two year weed mapping/GIS position which will be housed in the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Program. This funding came from the BLM, US Forest Service, Nevada Department of Transportation, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, USDA Bureau of Reclamation, and the University of Nevada. Cooperative Extension

We conducted the state's first abatement action using funds that we received from the 2005 Legislature. The abatement was conducted in Esmeralda County and a lien placed against the property.



Heading up the mountain with a pack full of Chemicals to spray the noxious weed Leafy Spurge (*Euphorbia esula*)

Upcoming events:

Nevada Weed Management Association

Conference will be held in Las Vegas October 9-12 at the Gold Coast Hotel and Casino (information at www.agri.state.nv.us).

North America Weed Management Association

annual conference will also be held in Las Vegas September 24-27 at the Sun Coast Hotel and Casino (information at www.nawma.org).

Livestock Identification updates

Staff Changes- Elko Brand Inspector, Jack Rice retired just before Christmas. At 87 he was the oldest brand inspector in the state. We wish him good luck and recognized him with a framed certificate.

2007 Legislative Session- The 2007 session of the Nevada Legislature is scheduled to begin February 4. The Department and this Division have several bills in the hopper. However, as Will Rodgers said "Nobody is safe when the legislature is in session".

Division of Administration

(Rick Gimlin)

Two positions have been filled in the Reno Office. Wendy Stewart is our new Administrative Assistant 4, filling the position previously occupied by Sandie Foley; and Caleb Gesick has filled the front desk position, which was previously occupied by Linda Meyers. Wendy is at extension 281, and Caleb is extension 221.

Don Henderson presented an overview of the 2007-2009 budget to the 2007 Legislature Joint Money committees on January 25, 2007. In addition to general information about the Department, the presentation included seven critical topics; including the Capitol Improvement Project for the New Sparks headquarters building, Noxious Weeds, and Virginia Range Estray horses. John O'Brien testified on questions concerning noxious weeds, and other staff attending the hearing included Dr. Anette Rink, Maureen Groach, Dawn Rafferty, Rick Gimlin, and Steve Grabski.

On January 19, 2007, 22 department staff attended training at the University of Nevada-Reno concerning prevention of workplace harassment and discrimination. The 4 hour training provided by Neil Alexander of Littler Mendelson, focused on case studies and common harassment and discrimination problems encountered by managers and supervisors in the workplace.

2006 Nevada Imported Fire Ant Survey

(Jeff Knight)

In 2006, the Red Imported Fire Ant (IFA) (*Solenopsis invicta*) was surveyed for in two Nevada counties. Trapping and data collection were performed by three full time NDOA seasonal employees in the southern part of the state, and one part time NDOA seasonal in the northern area. 8,903 traps were placed at over 300 sites. All were negative for fire ants. The University of Nevada- Las Vegas campus was found to be free of imported fire ants after four years of treatments. There are currently no areas in Nevada being treated for imported fire ants.

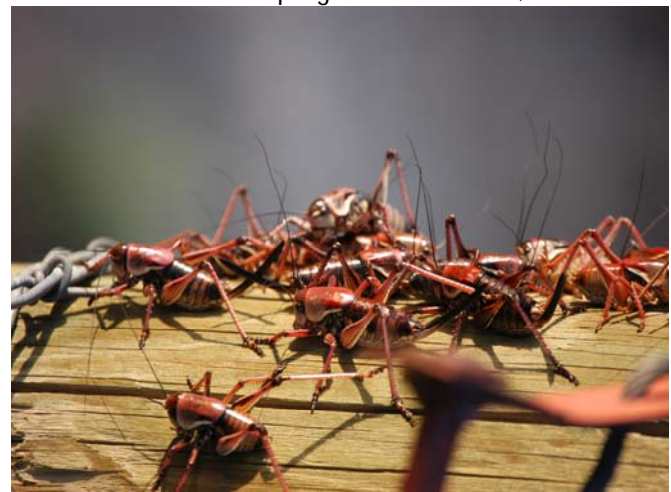


Collecting saltcedar leaf beetles

In 2006 the Dalmatian toadflax stem-boring weevil *Mecinus janthinus* was scheduled for release at four sites in Pioche. Inclement weather and conflicting schedules precluded the collection and shipment of the weevil to Nevada from any U.S. insectaries. In September, over wintering adult weevils were finally collected in Utah and shipped to Nevada. They will be stored in incubators for 2007 spring release.

2006 Mormon Cricket Survey and Control Summary

The Mormon cricket infestation continued for the eighth year in some areas of western Nevada. There were 8-10 million acres infested - slightly less than in 2005. The heaviest infestations were in the north-central part of the state. Over 350,000 acres were protected with aerial treatments of Dimilin, a growth regulator that prevents the crickets from maturing. Another 18,500 acres were treated aurally with Carbaryl bait. These treatments were a cooperative effort between USDA-APHIS-PPQ and NDOA with the assistance of county employees in Eureka County. Ground baiting by NDOA employees used about 90,000 lbs of bait and another 100,000 lbs were used by counties or distributed to producers at no cost. The total cost of the 2006 program was about \$1.1 million.



Other Invasive Pest Insect Surveys

In 2006 surveys were conducted for over 23 insect pests exotic to Nevada. Permanent NDOA staff and seasonal employees placed over 1,000 traps across Nevada in locations where the pests could enter or become established. Over 800 of the traps were for Gypsy moth and Japanese beetle. These were placed all 17 counties. The seasonal employees were funded by a USDA Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey grant. All results were negative. This year the Japanese beetle will be a high priority pest due to an infestation found in Orem Utah in 2006.

Biological Control of Weeds

The Saltcedar biological control program continued for its eighth year. Monitoring of the areas where the beetles are established showed that after 3-4 years of defoliation 50% to 75% mortality of the saltcedar has died. The beetles continued to increase their range in western Nevada. This year USDA and NDOA representatives collected over 500,000 beetles in Nevada. These beetles were shipped to other western states for projects to establish the beetles there.

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