

Plant Industry Programs Update

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES: Chuck Moses, Sean Gephart, Brett Allen

Core Activities:

PCO program personnel are working with the Department's Environmental Services Program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on hosting a 2015 Pesticide Inspector Residential Training (PIRT) program in February. Representatives are invited from all 50 states and numerous tribes to participate in this hands-on pesticide enforcement training. Field and classroom training will be held at the Spring Mountain Ranch State Park and other venues.

Inspection commitments were met or exceeded for federal fiscal year 2014. During this quarter, a total of 48 inspections/investigations were conducted with the help of PCO program personnel.

NDA Environmental Services staff worked with the State Entomologist, PCO Program Staff, and PIO Bob Conrad on a pollinator protection information sheet. Related to this, staff participated in a meeting held with state mosquito districts on August 27.

Staff worked with producers, dealers and applicators to coordinate a pesticide container recycling program in calendar year 2014. Approximately 40,000 pounds of plastic containers were chipped and recycled during the event which was held during this quarter. In addition to this, 1,150 pounds of waste pesticide were collected for disposal.

A total of 25 water samples were collected and submitted to the NDA Pesticide Laboratory for analysis. Water samples were collected from surface and groundwater wells, and also on tribal lands in cooperation with the Inter Tribal Council of Nevada, USGS and USFS.

Certification training and testing programs were held in Sparks, LV and Elko for persons who wish to apply restricted use pesticides. These training/testing programs are conducted in cooperation with the Nevada Cooperative Extension.

Other Programs:

Fertilizer and white rot samples were collected in the field. USDA-SITC inspections were conducted as part of the annual agreement with USDA-SITC.

EXPORT CERTIFICATION: Sean Gephart, Lead ACO

From August 1st through September 30th, NDA Export Certification staff issued a total of thirty (30) phytosanitary certificates to eight (8) different Nevada companies facilitating exportation of eight (8) different agricultural commodities to seven (7) countries. October's certification numbers are not yet available but since

the beginning of October there has been a marked increase of onions, walnuts, and potatoes being exported.

Other phytosanitary activities included notification that Eagle Lake Farms in Pioche, Nevada had begun harvesting potatoes ready for exportation to Mexico. On October 15th and 27th, NDA Export Certification Staff met with USDA PPQ Officers to discuss what inspections would be necessary for the potatoes to be easily exported. Currently one PPQ officer, based out of the Las Vegas office, has been conducting the inspections once per week but additional inspections are necessary until February 2015.

GAP: Ashley Jeppson

Three GAP audits were performed from July 1st through September 30th. Good Agriculture Practices outreach was performed to three farms. NDA is partnering with UNCE on a Risk Management Education grant and will be hosting 4 trainings during November-December of 2014.

NOXIOUS WEEDS: Jamie Greer

The Noxious Weed Program finalized and will be posting on the website a Nevada EDDMaps GIS use policy document and application form. The capabilities of all EDDMaps tools have been shared in NDA presentations to multiple regional and local partners and landowners. These presentations will continue through the winter and a large amount of positive feedback has already been received. If a board member is interested in having access to the Nevada EDDMaps GIS that was presented during the last meeting, please contact Jamie Greer at 775-353-3640 or jgreer@agri.nv.gov.

Contracts, totaling \$75,000 in state pesticide registration fee funding, are in place with four local groups for invasive plant management projects that benefit sage grouse. The Noxious Weed Program will also release a request for proposals of approximately \$55,000 of USFS State and Private Forestry federal funds in January 2015 for additional local group noxious weed control projects.

A regulatory letter was sent to the Carson City BLM district in response to lack of weed treatments and multiple stakeholder and industry complaints received by the NDA within the last year. In addition, 49 regulatory outreach letters were sent to property owners in the Washoe County area with high priority noxious weed infestations of species that are relatively contained to the Reno area. As momentum and enforcement pressures continue to increase with the noxious weed regulatory program, the need of a regulatory specialist position under the state noxious weed coordinator position for the upcoming growing season will be crucial.

The NDA Noxious Weed Program has increased its participation with other groups on the western and national scale. Jamie Greer was elected as a board member to the North American Invasive Species Management Association and

Western Weed Coordinators Committee. These groups allow the NDA Noxious Weed Program to have additional opportunities for regional/national funding and new research and technologies for improved overall noxious weed control and rangeland management.

NURSERY: Peggy McKie, Xenia Duranovic, Marlea Stout

NDA nursery inspectors represented Nevada at the Western Horticulture Inspection Society meeting held in San Diego, Ca in October. The meeting was hosted by California Department of Agriculture and focused on emerging plant pests of concern related to nursery stock in the western states. A tour of the Mexico-California border station was included, led by Customs and Border Protection officers. It was a rare opportunity to witness agricultural inspection activities at one of our international borders.

ORGANIC: Lindsay Dixon

The NDA Organic Certification Program has completed all but one on-site inspection of organic operations around the state. The one not yet completed is scheduled for renewal in December. NDA has had five new applicants to the program since June. All five have successfully completed the certification process and are now certified organic, bringing our total certified operations to 42. Program expansion is expected through increased out-reach, educational opportunities, and the greater availability of program staff to respond to industry needs. A full day workshop is being developed as part of the Small Farms Conference in Reno in January 2015.

OTHER GRANTS: Ashley Jeppson

--Farm to School: One school garden food safety inspection was performed in northern Nevada. School garden food safety training was provided to four school garden coordinators. Farm to School sessions have been created for the 2015 Small Farms Conference

--Federal State Marketing Improvement Program: A 2014 FSMIP award was received to perform value-added marketing research and education in southern Nevada. The project will be implemented by Lincoln Communities Action Team. The 2012 Northern Nevada Hispanic Marketing Initiative project has progressed from the interpretation and analysis of survey results, into the formulation of educational materials aimed at increasing awareness and interest in the local agriculture movement to the Hispanic community. Survey results indicated that there is a distinct interest in local agriculture, and a willingness to attend classes if offered to the Hispanic community. The next phase will be providing agriculture classes and creating Spanish based online resources to assist the Hispanic community with growing crops in Nevada.

PCO LICENSING AND ENFORCEMENT: Robert Leavitt, Scott Cichowlaz, Kathleen Bednarz, Jay Steele, Suzanne Suter

The Legislative Commission met on October 24th and approved the changes to Nevada's pesticide regulations for Custom Application of Pesticides and Certified Applicators which the Board of Agriculture had approved at its June 4th meeting. The new regulations were then filed with the Secretary of State so are now in effect. The Pest Control Operator program is communicating to the industry that the new regulations are in effect. The new regulations are to clarify language, unify definitions, stream-line operations, and raise the fee for the Restricted Use Pesticide Certificate.

Pest Control Operator Program personnel conducted or participated in several important continuing education events this fall. Pest Control Applicator Structural (C3) Training was held in Las Vegas October 24 and in Reno on November 17. Then there was the Integrated Pest Management track hosted by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and NDA at the Desert Green Conference November 6 and 7 in Henderson. Program personnel also supported the CTN Education Services Pesticide Applicator Licensee and Certification School in Reno November 04 and Las Vegas December 15 and 16. The PCO Program works with the Department's Environmental Services Program, the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and other agencies and organizations to provide training and updates on Nevada pest control laws and regulations, worker safety and personal protective equipment, and new frontiers in pest biology and pest control science and technology.

In addition, PCO Program personnel are working with the Department's Environmental Services Program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on hosting a 2015 Pesticide Inspector Residential Training (PIRT) program in Henderson in February. Representatives are invited from all 50 states and numerous tribes to participate in this hands-on pesticide enforcement training. Field work will be held at the Spring Mountain Ranch State Park and other venues.

To assist applicants in passing the examinations and to keep information current, the Program has updated and printed new study manuals for the new "Core" (formerly "General") category and the new "Weed" category.

Pest Control Operator personnel sent annual re-licensing packages to all pest control businesses in late November. Annual re-licensing started about December 01 and will continue through January of 2015.

PLANT PATHOLOGY AND SEED: Shouhua Wang, Rachel Bomberger

1. FY13 Farm Bill survey for potato cyst nematode is completed. Survey data conformed the absence of this quarantine pest in Nevada agricultural fields.
2. FY13 Farm Bill survey for *Phytophthora ramorum*, the sudden oak death (SOD) pathogen, is completed. All samples tested are negative for *P. ramorum*, but other related pathogenic species were found from nurseries

and urban environments.

3. Rachel Bomberger and Shouhua Wang attended 2014 American Phytopathological Society Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, and presented two posters on first detection of two important plant diseases.
4. Further research on a new fungal disease on Screwbean Mesquite trees is being conducted to understand the biology of the disease and potential impact on other trees and plants.
5. The plant pathology lab is conducting more studies on newly found fungal disease on peppermint crops to identify the specific strains so that an effective management approach can be prescribed.
6. Annual allium crop inspection for white rot disease was completed. All field except one garlic field were found to be free from this quarantine disease.
7. Certification for seed potato is in progress. We have completed first 3 phases of certification process.

RODENT CONTROL: Robert Little

As of October 7th NDA sold out of all strychnine product. On October 28th, we placed an order for enough raw strychnine product to produce 350 100oz jugs. Once raw product is received, mixing will take place Spring 2015.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK: Ashley Jeppson

The 2014 Request for Proposal was released. 21 applications were received. 13 projects were submitted to USDA and were selected for funding. Project scopes included some of the following: food safety cost analysis, know your farmer video marketing, pumpkin variety trials, organic plant propagation, and next generation specialty crop farmer education.

ENTOMOLOGY: Jeff Knight, Jim York, Curtis Irwin

The 2015 CAPS and Farm Bill projects were submitted to USDA.

Mormon crickets and grasshopper surveys were finalized and no new infestations were found since the last report. All the cricket survey data have been mapped and submitted to appropriate national databases. Samples collected from this year's exotic pest surveys are being sorted for target pests and new records.

The entomologist gave a lecture for Master Gardener's training in Las Vegas and is assisting with the Davidson Academy entomology team for the Science Olympiad.

The entomologist was interviewed on Africanized honey bees in Nevada by the Las Vegas public radio station, on spiders by a Reno television station, and on flies by a Reno television station. An article on identifying beetles written by the entomologist was published in the Nevada Pest Control Association magazine.

One of the three entomology interns from CABNR continues to working on the insect collection and various other projects including digitizing the NDA's herbarium. Conversion of specimen label data to pdf form was completed and

work has begun on putting that into an excel table.

A meeting on pollinator protection was held in Las Vegas with health officials, parks supervisors and pest control industry representatives. Robert Leavitt assisted with the meeting.

The entomologist inspected the Silver Springs area for a reported fly problem coming from a new pet food plant there. No issues were found and the problem will be revisited in the spring.

Entomology assisted with the NDA booth at the CABNR open house at Main Station Farm in Reno and also participated in the Ag in the Classroom event at the Lahontan Elementary School in Fallon (225+ students).

RANGE HEALTH PROGRAM: Tina Mudd

NDA's Rangeland Health Program (RHP) has been developing the monitoring component of the RHP. NDA is seeking to cooperate with regional Technical Schools and Colleges to utilize range and science students to assist with monitoring. Additionally, NDA is working to schedule monitoring workshops at ranches in the spring starting in April.

The rangeland monitoring app is scheduled to be finished in April. NDA is currently working with accounting to execute a contract for its development. Development of the components of the app require combining accepted monitoring protocols and simplifying them for the app

The RHP program presented EDDMaps and will take sign-ups for the monitoring program at the Cattlemen's Convention and the Conservation District Convention.

The RHP is also working to execute a cooperative agreement for monitoring with the BLM in order to facilitate monitoring and fill data gaps. NDA is also working with the NRCS to execute a cooperative agreement to assist with the Virginia Range Monitoring. The Virginia Range Resource Assessment requires updating in order to adjust forage capacity based on over a decade of over utilization by horses. NDA is working with the NRCS to accomplish this in the summer of 2015.