

June 1, 2016 Board Update

Plant Industry Division

Staff

We are still trying to fill the Agriculturist 4 (PCO Program manager), Agriculturist 4 (Noxious Weeds Coordinator) and Agriculturist 3 (Rangeland Health Manager) positions. We are planning to interview for the Las Vegas Agricultural Enforcement Officer mid-June.

Regulations

Workshops on regulations regarding Aquaculture and Fertilizer Tonnage Reporting were held on May 16; proposed language has been sent to LCB for review.

Environmental Services

Staff conducted four waste pesticide collection events (Reno & Las Vegas) this quarter that amounted to over 9,000 pounds of waste pesticides properly disposed. Two pesticide certification trainings were conducted in May to train Forest Service and Douglas County noxious weed control staff.

Chemistry

Staff will have a complete medical marijuana testing method developed and in place by June to test for cannabinoids, terpenes, pesticide residue and THC. They will also use this method to test for THC level in industrial hemp as well.

Producer and Produce Vendor Certification:

Producer Certification activity has increased by 50 percent over the same time last year, primarily due to school garden certifications in southern Nevada. As anticipated Producer Vendor certification is slowly going into effect, we have certified one vendor so far and made two stops on roadside stands.

Food Safety

Staff are in the process of preparing a Health and Human Services grant in cooperation with FDA that will provide financial assistance in creating a Nevada Produce Safety Program. This program will be implemented as a result of the FDA's FSMA, PSR requirements. These regulations will require farmers that produce crops typically consumed raw and within a designated farm income bracket to have measures in place to minimize food safety risks. As a result, NDA will be establishing an education and regulatory program to help produce growers comply with the federal regulations.

Nursery

Nursery and Noxious Weed Program staff have been working to identify and initiate removal of state listed Category "A" noxious weed *P. setaceum* (green fountaingrass) from a nursery property and surrounding parcels in southern Nevada. Colorado Potato Beetle compliance agreements have been renewed with state departments of agriculture in Idaho and Utah in addition to nurseries in those states to allow entry of primarily tomato plants from quarantined areas. A nursery in Utah and Arizona have also been added.

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Entomology

A positive identification of Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP) was reported from Laughlin on May 11. Staff is working with the USDA to conduct a delimiting survey to determine where the insect has established in Southern Nevada. ACP has been known to accrue in Bullhead City, AZ and has probably migrated to Laughlin. Once the infected area has been established, a quarantine will be placed to restrict movement of host material plants in and out of the area. The insect is known to transmit a bacterial disease called citrus greening which is fatal to host citrus plants and a major threat to the citrus industry.

Plant Pathology

Two Reno High School students under the guidance of the Plant Pathologist performed a research project titled "Increasing the efficacy of plant based treatments on onion white rot disease" won first place in the local science fair and are heading to the international science fair. The lab detected a phytoplasma pathogen for the first time in Nevada from a garlic crop. The type of the phytoplasma is being determined by its DNA sequence. The lab is also studying a new disease found in a cucumber crop to assess the impact of this disease on other cucumber varieties. This disease was reported only in Crete island of Greece, but not known in the US.

Seed Certification

Allium Inspections will start early this year due to an increase of more than 70 acres of garlic and 300 acres of onion being registered this year. This program is also focusing heavily on native seed certification due to industry demand.