

Board of Agriculture, December 7, 2016 Meeting Plant Industry Update



Staff

PI hired an Agriculturist 4 and program manager of the Pest Control Operators program and a new Agriculturist 3 who will manage the Worker Protection Standards program. We are recruiting for a replacement conservation staff specialist 2, who is the NDA's appointment on the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team

Regulations

A public meeting was held on October 24, 2016 to discuss the Bill Draft Review that was submitted to legislature to require government entities who perform pest control to license in Nevada. Gardeners and large landscape/golf course maintenance companies who currently use an outdated exemption will also be required to license to perform pest control. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for December 13, 2016.

Food Safety

As mentioned at the June, 1 2016 BOA meeting the NDA applied for a Health and Human Services and Food and Drug Administration grant to be the agency in Nevada to implement and regulate the provisions under the newly federally mandated Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), Produce Safety Rule (PSR). NDA was awarded \$1,985,000 and will collaborate with the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources (CABNR) to provide education, training, and technical assistance to all produce growers interested in participating over the next five years. Most Nevada raw produce growers are anticipated to comply with the regulations by fall of 2019. The proposal includes funding for staff to develop education and enforcement program, farm inventory software to identify farms that will need to comply, and outreach materials to notify all growers of the federal regulations and education opportunities.

Environmental Services

The waste pesticide and pesticide container recycling program properly disposed of approximately 15,000 lbs of containers and 1,500 lbs of pesticides that otherwise may have ended up in landfills or potentially leached or poured into Nevada's water sources or environment.

Entomology

Staff collaborated with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to inspect and treat two moving company trailers infested with Gypsy moth egg masses on outdoor furniture that were stopped at the California border check station. Neither the local USDA nor the NDA have the staff or resources to continue further treat infested articles. NDA is working with other western states on requiring the national USDA program to strengthen its program on the moment of shipping containers and moving trailers out of quarantined areas in the U.S.

Plant Pathology

The lab made progress in investigating the causes of high mortality (approximately 70 percent in some varieties) of plants in 2016 hemp crops. It was found that four different *Fusarium* species co-infect root system and cause root rot and death of plants. Our data confirmed that the failure of hemp crop was due to *Fusarium* root rot disease, a new cannabis disease not reported

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previously. Our comparative studies with imported hemp seed demonstrated that these *Fusarium* species were not from imported seeds. Cannabis plants are very susceptible to *Fusarium* wilt and root rot diseases, and a crop can fail in the middle of season if these pathogens exist in the field. This research-based information will guide farmers to grow industrial hemp crops successfully and sustainably.

Staff completed 2015 cyst nematode survey project funded by USDA 2014 Farm Bill Section 10007 program. All data were uploaded into the USDA NAPIS database, which document Nevada as a potato cyst nematode free state.

The allium quarantine program is in the process of developing new services that will offer crop health assessments to producers through their allium inspections. They are also developing enhance sterilization protocols for entry and exit of fields by inspectors.

Seed Certification

The program is refocusing efforts to account for larger demand from industry to support native seed initiatives. Activities include coordination with universities and federal agencies to assess industry needs, identifying additional native seed sources, and the development of a brochure to encourage more production of native seed.

Pest Control Operator

Staff completed a detailed scope of work to develop the online registration, test scheduling and taking portal, and Continuing Education Credit (CEU) tracking system to submit to for the contract for the beginning stages of development. It is anticipated that this system will be in place for the 2018 registration period. The program has been diligently holding workshops, hearings and public meetings to work with industry on revisions to Nevada Administrative Code and for open discussion on the submitted Bill Draft Review.

Industrial Hemp

Staff is working on a list of pesticides that are not prohibited for use on industrial hemp similar to the list developed for medical marijuana. Staff are also in the midst of developing a hemp seed certification program, which would be the second in the U.S. The staff expects an increase in production for the 2017 growing season based on the interest the program manager has received. The first year totals for the industrial hemp program are as follows:

- 14 total producers participated in the 2016 season
- 6 producers failed to plant or had a failed crop
- 7 producers experienced success in planting and produced a crop
- 1 producer has yet to harvest due to late planting
- A total of 9 varieties of industrial hemp were utilized in last year's trials
- A total of 8,759.00 lbs. of seed were imported for planting

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Noxious Weeds

Staff conducted a training of Department of Transportation employees in Las Vegas to properly identify noxious weeds and to use the EDDMaps app to report infestations. Staff developed Presence of Noxious Weeds field notices and door hangers to distribute to property owners as a first contact to educate and increase awareness of noxious weed regulations to work towards control and compliance.

Rangeland Health

Staff continue to collaborate in revising the Ranchers Monitoring Guide which is expected to be released by mid-January along with the long anticipated Rangeland Monitoring app developed by the NDA.