

NEVADA BOARD OF AGRICULTURE MEETING  
June 4, 2014

Plant Industry Programs Update

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES:**

**Enforcement and Monitoring:**

55 pesticide related inspections were conducted by Environmental Services and Pest Control Licensing staff. This number included marketplace inspections conducted with the assistance of NDA Nursery staff in Las Vegas. 4 phytosanitary inspections, 4 USDA-COL inspections and 6 USDA-SITC inspections were conducted.

**Pesticide Waste Disposal Program:**

- Collected 462 pounds of pesticide waste this quarter which is stored at the warehouse;
- Participated in a pesticide waste collection event with Rail City in Yerington;
- Updated pesticide container disposal fact sheet.

**Ground and Surface Water Protection Program**

PIO Bob Conrad is filming a public service video with staff on the water protection program, now available on the NDA web site.

- A total of 30 surface/groundwater samples were collected this quarter and submitted to the NDA pesticide laboratory.

**Certification and Training:**

**Pesticide Applicator Training & Testing (Other Training Programs):**

Staff participated in certification training on January 29; the training was teleconference to cooperative extension offices throughout the state. A presentation was given in Battle Mountain for a certification program sponsored by cooperative extension on January 30; certification tests were given on 30<sup>th</sup>, as well as a certification testing program held in Winnemucca the previous day. Environmental Services staff participated in the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition training offered in Ely, Nevada on January 9. Staff also helped organize and participate in the annual NLA conference on February 19. A pesticide laws and regulation presentation was given for Target Specialty Products on March 11. 18<sup>th</sup>, provided a presentation titled "Fumigation for Burrowing Pests" at the United Agricultural Services annual trade show and conference in Tonopah. February 6<sup>th</sup>: provided a 2 hour pesticide safety training at the Green Industry Training Seminar offered through the Nevada Cooperative Extension office in Reno. The training received positive evaluations which perpetuated a second presentation offered on March 12<sup>th</sup>.

Defensive driver training programs were given on February 25 (Sparks) and March 4 (Las Vegas); 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, judged FFA students at the annual FFA state convention. The two competitions judged were: Natural Resources and Agricultural Sales.

**EXPORT CERTIFICATION: Sean Gephart, Lead ACO**

February 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>, a total of seventy-four (74) phytosanitary certificates were issued by NDA staff inspectors covering the exportation of eight (8) different agricultural commodities to ten (10) countries. For the month of May,

a total of eleven (11) certificates were issued exporting six (6) different commodities to five (5) counties. Other relevant activities occurred April 28<sup>th</sup> when NDA staff collaborated with USDA Export Certification Specialist, Alana Wild, during which time an evaluation of a hay processing plant was conducted. The evaluation was performed to determine if the facility met compliance measures needed to export compressed hay to China. Following the evaluation, an inspection checklist was developed and provided to the plant managers with the intent to facilitate further exportation to China.

**GAP: Ashley Jeppson**

Two Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) audits were performed during the last quarter. GAP audit outreach was performed to 2 southern Nevada farms. Approximately 15 producers, health officials, agriculture students, and school garden representatives received training on GAP.

**NOXIOUS WEEDS: Robert Little, Jamie Greer**

A noxious weed abatement was performed in Douglas County through use of the new NDA and County Abatement MOU and cost share. County Commissioner presentations were made to all counties except White Pine and Clark County in April and May regarding need to increase noxious weed regulation enforcement throughout the state. Responses were varied and the noxious weed program will continue to follow-up with each county. The noxious weed free program implemented new procedures requiring those interested in participating in the program to fill out an application before the season. Five new gravel pits were inspected and certified in the Elko area in May of this year for new Noble Energy exploratory oil drilling projects on BLM land. This is a significant increase in certified Nevada gravel for this year. Noxious weed program was notified and received a new USFS State and Private Forestry \$55,000 grant for 2014 and 2015 seasons.

**NURSERY: Peggy McKie, Xenia Duranovic, Marlea Stout**

Nursery inspections are at their peak both in the north and south regions, with southern inspections beginning to slow as the area heats up and shipments decline. Nursery inspectors Duranovic and Stout took the lead in responding to a sudden oak death (SOD) trace forward notification from USDA PPQ which required Nevada inspectors to contact businesses that received nursery stock from a SOD-positive nursery in California, inspect, hold and isolate symptomatic plants until samples could be tested in NDA's plant pathology laboratory. Contacts included landscapers, retail nurseries, and homeowners. The trace forward effort is still underway.

**ORGANIC: Peggy McKie, Ashley Jeppson, Jamie Greer**

In support of rebuilding the organic program, Ashley Jeppson and Jamie Greer attended the first of two organic inspection trainings. The week-long organic farm inspection training prepares them to apprentice with an experienced

inspector, gaining experience to inspect independently. Peggy McKie, Dawn Rafferty and Ashley Jeppson conducted interviews to fill the organic officer position; a successful candidate was selected and will start in early June.

**OTHER GRANTS: Ashley Jeppson**

-- --Farm to School

One school garden food safety trainings was provided in northern Nevada. One Good Agriculture Practices training was provided in Southern Nevada. Two presentations were provided at the National Farm to School Conference in Austin, Texas on the Nevada Farm to School grant project. Outreach was provided to various states on how to develop/enhance a farm to school food safety program.

--Federal State Marketing Improvement Program:

The 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 PCO Licensing and Enforcement Program (Program) has completed annual relicensing for all qualified pest control operators and businesses that have applied to date in 2014. The Program is now preparing a report for the Secretary of State to comply with SB 21 of 2013.

To date, the Program has approved 120 in-state continuing education classes for 2014. Courses vary from one to eight hours of continuing education per class. Program personnel are working on preparations and agendas for the two large continuing education events to be held this fall: the Desert Green Conference and the CTN Education Services Pesticide Applicator Licensee and Certification School. These pesticide continuing education programs are a coordinated effort between the Pest Control Section and Environmental Services Section. Pesticide Continuing Education includes training and updates on a wide variety of pest and pest control topics including Nevada pest control laws and regulations, worker safety and personal protective equipment.

Since January 01, 2014 to date, the Program has administered 441 Operator examinations, 94 Principal examinations, 30 Agent exams and 43 Restricted Use Pesticide examinations in Las Vegas and 127 Operator examinations, 27 Principal Examinations, 2 Agent and 310 Restricted Use Pesticide examinations in Sparks. In addition, the Program conducted 27 background reviews for potential Primary Principals. To assist applicants to pass the examinations, and keep information current, the Program has updated the Industrial and Institutional category study manual which is at the printer and has expects to complete its

update of the Structural category study manual by June 30.

Program personnel also worked on proposed changes to Nevada's pesticide regulations for Custom Application of Pesticides and Certified Applicators (Nevada Administrative Code section 555). Proposed changes were to clarify language, unify definitions, stream-line operations, and raise the fee for the Restricted Use Pesticide Certificate. One Workshop was held April 17 in Las Vegas with video to Sparks and Elko to get public and industry input. The Program then worked with the Legislative Counsel Bureau to incorporate the public and industry input into a final package of proposed regulation changes. One Hearing was held on May 21 in Las Vegas with video to Sparks and Elko on the final proposal.

PLANT PATHOLOGY: PLANT PATHOLOGY: Shouhua Wang, Rachel Bomberger.

- 1) Two farm bill proposals were awarded for funding by the USDA to conduct potato cyst nematode survey and sudden oak death pathogen survey during FY14.
- 2) We have detected and confirmed a new disease on Mediterranean fan palm caused by *Phytophthora parasitica* through lab research and greenhouse test. This is the first detection from Mediterranean fan palm in the US.
- 3) The plant pathology laboratory was formally accredited by APHIS-PPQ National Plant Protection Laboratory Accreditation Program (NPPLAP) and certified to perform official diagnosis for citrus greening disease.
- 4) A putative new fungal disease was found on mesquite trees in southern Nevada. The identity of the fungal organism is being investigated through joint efforts from scientists at California Department of Food and Agriculture and University of California, Davis.
- 5) Additional 400 soil samples were collected from potato fields to examine the presence of potato cyst nematode, a devastating organism regulated by the USDA.
- 6) About 200 plant samples were collected and are being analyzed in the laboratory to detect a number of exotic and regulated pathogens.
- 7) The plant pathology laboratory functions as a state plant diagnostic center to provide services to the public and government programs. Survey shows that 100% of clients rated our service as "extremely professional" and "extremely satisfied".

#### RODENT CONTROL

In March we made 123 100oz bottles of strychnine paste and sold them within two weeks. High demand continues for this season. We are currently in the process to purchase twice the amount of our last purchase.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK: The 2014 Request for Proposal was released. 21

Global Trade/Economic Development: Jeff Sutich

Global Food Ingredients Trade Show Shanghai March 24-27; Trade Mission to Beijing March 28-29; Governor led Trade Mission to Canada April 14-18; Nutraceutical Trade Show Geneva May 4-8.

Nevada companies assisted with export promotion: Nature's Bakery, DFA Dairy Plant, Kimmie Candy, Creo Mundi, Coral LLC, Flavor Consultants, Francovich Distillers.

Economic Development: Met with 6 CA companies on a NV Energy tour to discuss expansions to NV due to friendly tax climate.

Working with locating a fish farm to Northwest Nevada. This project will produce 10,000 tons of fish annually and create 300-400 jobs. Ground breaking is planned for the end of 2014.

Other companies currently assisting with expansion or relocation: Aloha Medicinals, Vitamins for Life, Westec Inc, M2 Ingredients.

Awarded Nature's Bakery and Pipeline Pacific Specialty Crop grant funding to attend an ExporTech training.