

JOINT MEETING OF THE
PLANT PROTECTION AND QUARANTINE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND THE
NATIONAL PLANT BOARD COUNCIL
RIVERDALE, MARYLAND
MARCH 25-27, 2000

OPENING COMMENTS

Ric Dunkle pointed out that APHIS is well positioned for requesting significant new initiatives in the FY 2002 budget because of very high visibility of our programs in the Secretary's office, Congress and stakeholders.

Bob Balaam reported that the Plant Board has decided to replace the National Plant Board Council and Executive Committee with a Board of Directors management structure. This plan will be presented for approval at the August, 2000 national meeting. The Board of Directors will be comprised of the national President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer, past President, 4 Regional Plant Board Presidents and 4 Regional Plant Board representatives.

REGULATED NON-QUARANTINE PESTS-OFFICIAL CONTROL

Bob Balaam presented a concept paper along with a draft regulation that sets forth criteria for regulating imported commodities for non-quarantine pests. To provide further background to this discussion, Nancy Klag distributed and discussed an ICPM (Interim Commission on Phytosanitary Measures) draft standard for official control. He also reported that another ICPM meeting will be held in June to develop draft guidelines for applying the regulated non-quarantine pest concept.

Action: In order to merge the ideas in these documents, we agreed to have the NPB concept paper reviewed by OGC, Trade Support Team and other appropriate USDA entities and provide feedback to NPB. NPBC participants were asked to provide Nancy feedback on their reading of the draft Official Control standard for consideration as the ICPM progresses in developing the standard.

INTERNATIONAL SERVICES BRIEFING

John Nichols gave a briefing on the mission, staffing and placement of international services employees overseas. Seventy-five foreign service officers are placed in 24 countries. This was important from the standpoint of better understanding the role of IS in safeguarding. Nichols agreed to provide copies of his presentation to participants.

FEDERAL BOLL WEEVIL QUARANTINE

Since reinfestation is a legitimate concern, those States that have completed eradication have expressed a growing interest in establishing a federal quarantine for boll weevil. It was pointed out that a quarantine does not reduce the need for detection survey in weevil free areas, but the cost of a quarantine would decline as eradication progresses. Further, a quarantine would be an incentive to industry in infested states to get involved in an eradication program.

Action: APHIS will develop a proposed rule and budget for inclusion in the FY 2003 budget. We will also attempt to develop a funding level for quarantine in the boll weevil line item for FY 2002.

It was proposed that a new line item (Domestic Quarantine Enforcement) be developed to provide funding for enforcement of quarantines on boll weevil, pine shoot beetle and other pests, quarantines which are not funded through traditional line items. It is believed such a generic line item could increase our base funding and afford flexibility in where funds are allocated, depending on priorities and risk.

STRATEGIES FOR EXOTIC PEST DETECTION

The enthusiasm for this topic was illustrated by the active engagement of the group in discussion about the importance of early detection on new invaders, and the current weakness of this vital part of our safeguarding continuum. There was general agreement that survey initiatives must be targeted toward specific pests or pathways. This conclusion emphasizes the importance of creating, and institutionalizing into our operational program planning, specific resource- or ecoregion-based pest lists. This endeavor is currently being lead out of CPHST in Raleigh, and is done jointly with ESA, APS and WSSA. But many members of the NPBC and PPQMT were not aware of the status of the project, nor how to access these lists as they currently stand.

Action: Emphasize to CPHST the vital importance of developing pest lists and instruct CPHST to place the latest information on a web site linked to others to improve visibility of this information to stakeholders.

It was agreed that effective pest detection requires leveraging industry and public interests and resources. Secretary Glickman is interested in supporting a \$30-40 million multi-year national survey for yet-undetected populations of exotic species. We have suggested that this program be designed with very specific targets in mind (pest list) and with abundant, but disciplined and coordinated, involvement of the public. Generally, Federal involvement would be for training, planning, coordinating and maintaining communication and reporting mechanisms.

How PPQ and States Cooperate

While this discussion started out with a somewhat philosophical tone, several important ideas worthy to pursue arose.

Historically, an MOU existed between PPQ and NPB which described roles and responsibilities. We agreed to resurrect that document, provide further input into content, being sure to include OGC in the process.

Action: Chuck Schwalbe will obtain a copy of the subject MOU and distribute it to PPQMT, NPBC and OGC for information and comment prior to pursuing the next steps in formalizing the MOU.

Much like the NPB was contracted to conduct the Safeguarding Review, there are opportunities to engage the NPB (as an organization) to perform certain program delivery functions. As an

example, an aggressive survey program for invasive species could be handled nationally through the NPB. This arrangement could provide a potential means for partially funding the Executive Director position, which most believe would be a constructive force in bringing State and PPQ planning and budgeting into better harmony. No follow-up action was identified, but this idea certainly requires further discussion between PPQ and NPBC.

Pine Shoot Beetle

After attempting to reach agreement with the NPBC on discontinuing the pine shoot beetle quarantine, certain states still view the pest risk from this insect sufficient to maintain the quarantine, even though funding for enforcement is practically nil. Since the recent public meetings on imported fire ant created a significant heightening of interest in that program, it was suggested APHIS do the same with PSB. Such public airing of the PSB issue could increase awareness of this problem in a broader sector of industry and would afford broader input into decision making on the worth of regulations for this pest.

Action: Mary Neal to develop a plan for scheduling 3-4 public meetings seeking input into the importance of quarantine in mitigating the impacts of PSB.

FY 2002 BUDGET RANKING

Much of Wednesday, April 26 was devoted to reviewing the FY2002 budget line items and placing the various spending levels in rank order. The line item planning documents were distributed at the meeting and a printout of the finalized ranking is attached. There was unanimous agreement that this process for establishing priorities for PPQ was the best ever and Paul Eggert and Terri Burrell's staff are encouraged to improve this very difficult planning process even further.

Action: Russ Caplan and a representative of the NPBC are to prepare a 3-4 page narrative setting forth the strategy for PPQ's budget request and justifying increase to approximately \$300 million. This document is due before May 19, at which time the AMT meets to develop the APHIS 2002 budget.