

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2006-32
July 18, 2006

SUBJECT: Plum Pox Virus Detected in Niagara County, New York

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On July 7, 2006, Plum Pox Virus (PPV) was confirmed in samples collected through surveys being conducted in New York State. This is the first time the disease has been found at any location in the United States outside of Pennsylvania. Plum pox virus (PPV) is the cause of a serious disease affecting plums, peaches, nectarines, and apricots.

The infested orchard in New York is a 1-acre block of plums, located in Niagara County. The orchard has been surveyed annually since 2000, with no evidence of PPV having been found in any previous surveys. Only 2 of the 108 trees in the block have been found to be positive for PPV, based on testing carried out by Cornell University at Ithaca, New York, and confirmed by the APHIS laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. Testing and confirmation involved the use of both ELISA and PCR testing methods. On July 14, 2006, the PPV strain was confirmed by the APHIS laboratory to be the D strain, which is also present in Pennsylvania and Ontario. The D strain is not seedborne and is not known to affect commercial or wild cherry species.

A unified incident command post has been established in New York, and APHIS is currently working with the State in conducting detection and delimiting surveys to determine the scope of the current infestation. Based on these results APHIS and the State will be able to determine what regulatory and control measures may be necessary. Since the D strain is not seedborne and not spread through fruit movement, any regulatory measures established would only affect the movement of plant material other than fruit.

Paul R. Eggert for

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Deputy Administrator