



THE CENTRAL PLANT BOARD

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Osama El-Lissy
Deputy Administrator for Plant Protection and Quarantine
USDA APHIS PPQ
Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

July 7, 2017

Dear Mr. El-Lissy,

In 2014 you received resolutions from 3 of the 4 regional plant boards on the importance, value and need for a National Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) meeting. In 2016 you received a letter from the National Plant Board recommending APHIS support of a National CAPS meeting. To date, these requests have not resulted in APHIS providing the support necessary to hold a National CAPS meeting. Based on the importance of this meeting, the Central Plant Board is providing this letter to keep the National CAPS meeting on the APHIS priority list for support.

The CAPS program is one of the cornerstone programs in the state/federal plant protection partnership. This meeting has not occurred in 7 years and is critically important to the continuity and consistency of implementation of the CAPS program across the country. Since the last national meeting there has been significant staff turnover both within states and APHIS. A meeting providing workshops and training on the core underpinnings of the CAPS program, enhanced field identification and survey techniques are needed for both state and federal professional staff. A meeting of this type would educate staff, improve uniformity and consistency of surveys and reporting and enhance the overall effectiveness of the CAPS program.

The Central Plant Board leadership would like to enter into discussion with APHIS on what states may be able to do, in partnership with APHIS, to mutually support a National CAPS

meeting. We believe there are creative approaches that can be explored to develop the necessary support for a National CAPS meeting.

Sincerely,



Collin Wamsley, President
Central Plant Board

Distribution:

Matt Rhoads, Executive Director, Policy Management, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Alan Dowdy, Associate Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

Paula Henstridge, Assistant Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ

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