



EASTERN PLANT BOARD

Vicki Smith, President
Agricultural Experiment Station
123 Huntington Street
New Haven, CT 06504-1106
(203) 974-8474

Carol Holko, President Elect
Plant Protection and Weed Mgmt.
Maryland Dept. of Agriculture
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-5920

Piera Siegert, Secretary-Treasurer
Division of Plant Industry
New Hampshire Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food
29 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 271-2561

May 14, 2012

Rebecca Bech, Deputy Administrator
USDA, APHIS, PPQ
Washington DC

Dear Rebecca,

At the recent Eastern Plant Board (EPB) meeting in Burlington Vermont, we discussed APHIS' proposed changes to the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Program. We understand and support the overall response by the program to address severe budget cuts in the context of survey results and effects on impacted industries. We appreciate APHIS' data-based approach to decision making and efforts to provide stakeholders with detailed maps and summaries of current and historical activities and results.

The EPB enthusiastically supports EAB biocontrol efforts and would like for this to continue to be a high priority for APHIS. The numbers of tools in the toolbox are limited and biocontrol will be critical to controlling the movement of EAB and managing the existing EAB infestations in the future.

The EPB also supports the concept of the Contiguous Federal EAB Quarantine to facilitate the interstate movement of regulated articles by impacted industries while continuing to protect areas not yet known to be infested with EAB. APHIS should acknowledge state quarantines in their outreach efforts for the contiguous area quarantine. The current compliance agreement model for movement from regulated to non-infested areas, including mitigation measures at receiving facilities, should be reevaluated for effectiveness and enforceability with a diminished APHIS regulatory workforce.

The EPB has concerns regarding the model that was used for the 2012 EAB national survey design and suggests rigorous verification of the model in the future. We also feel strongly that APHIS should allow for flexibility by state officials and state level PPQ operatives who are more familiar with local conditions to adjust trap placement to target known high risk pathways and sites with potential for establishment of EAB.

The EPB states look forward to continued cooperation with APHIS to manage and contain this devastating wood pest that threatens our valuable native ash resource.

Sincerely,

Victoria Lynn Smith, President
Eastern Plant Board

cc: Dave Kaplan, USDA APHIS PPQ
Paul Chaloux, USDA APHIS PPQ
Ian MacFarlane, NAASF Executive Director
Mike Cooper, National Plant Board President
Philip Marshall, Central Plant Board President
Vicki Smith, Eastern Plant Board President
Christel Harden, Southern Plant Board President
Donna Rise, Western Plant Board President