

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

DA-2018-35

September 26, 2018

Subject: APHIS Lifts the Domestic Quarantine for Pink Bollworm (*Pectinophora gossypiella*) in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas

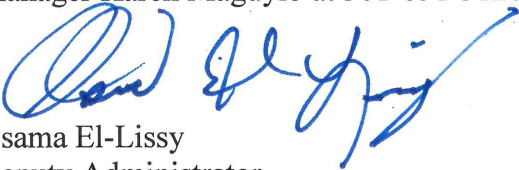
To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective immediately, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is lifting the pink bollworm domestic quarantine in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, and is removing all restrictions on the movement of pink bollworm host material from these states. Over the last 18 years, APHIS and its partners have conducted rigorous control and regulatory activities aimed at pink bollworm in these states. After extensive survey, we find all areas in these states free of this pest. As a result, APHIS is lifting the domestic quarantine for pink bollworm. This action allows for unrestricted movement of cotton plant parts and other host commodities from these areas.

Pink bollworm is a significant pest of cotton, okra, and kenaf. This pest was first detected in Texas in 1917. In 1955, APHIS established domestic pink bollworm regulations (7 CFR 301.52 *et seq.*) and designated Arizona, Arkansas, California, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as pink bollworm-regulated areas. APHIS later placed Nevada, Mississippi, and Missouri under quarantine. By 2003, only Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas remained under regulation.

Since 2000, APHIS has worked closely with the state departments of agriculture in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas; the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association; Arizona Cotton Research and Protection Council; the South Central New Mexico Cotton Boll Weevil Control Committee; the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation; the National Cotton Council Pink Bollworm Action Committee; the Pink Bollworm Technical Advisory Committee; and other stakeholders. This Federal Order is the result of their cooperative efforts.

For additional information concerning cotton-related programs, please contact National Policy Manager Karen Maguylo at 301-851-3128.



Osama El-Lissy  
Deputy Administrator  
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment: Federal Order

## FEDERAL ORDER

Removing the Pink Bollworm (*Pectinophora gossypiella*) Domestic Quarantine in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas; Designating Portions of Southern Florida as Pink Bollworm Regulated Areas; Changing the Criteria for Designating a Regulated Area

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Effective immediately, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is lifting the pink bollworm domestic quarantine in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas, and is removing all restrictions on the movement of pink bollworm host material from these states. This action is based on four years of surveys with no pink bollworm captures in areas that had active eradication programs due to significant pink bollworm populations that routinely caused crop loss. It is also based on two years of surveys with no captures in areas within quarantined states that had only sporadic pink bollworm infestations.

This Federal Order also designates generally-infested areas in South Florida where pink bollworm populations have been found. These areas include: Everglades National Park, Fort Zachary Taylor State Park in Key West, and Long Key. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry has designated these locations as pink bollworm-regulated areas and placed restrictions on the intrastate movement of regulated articles from these areas. According to 7 CFR 301.52-2, APHIS may consider less than an entire state to be a pink bollworm-regulated area if the state has adopted and is enforcing intrastate movement restrictions that are substantially the same as those outlined in the pink bollworm federal regulations.

Finally, this Federal Order changes the criteria APHIS will use to designate a pink bollworm-regulated area. Under 7 CFR 301.52-2, detection of one pink bollworm in any life stage would trigger a quarantine. This criterion does not distinguish between detections that indicate a reproducing pink bollworm population in the area and those that do not. Now, there must be evidence of a reproducing population based on (1) the capture of a larva, or (2) separate captures of adult moths more than 30 days apart, or (3) captures of 10 or more adult moths within a single survey. This change aligns the pink bollworm program with other domestic quarantine programs.

Under the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*, PPA), the Secretary of Agriculture may prohibit or restrict the interstate movement of a plant or plant product if these actions are determined to be necessary to prevent the dissemination of a plant pest. The Secretary has delegated the authority to make such a determination to APHIS. This Federal Order is issued pursuant to the PPA.

Pink bollworm is a significant pest of cotton, okra, and kenaf. The pest was first detected in Texas in 1917. In 1955, APHIS established the pink bollworm domestic regulations through a rule in the *Federal Register* (20 FR 4935, July 12, 1955) and designated Arizona, Arkansas, California, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as pink bollworm-regulated areas.

Subsequently, APHIS designated the states of Nevada, Mississippi, and Missouri as regulated areas. Through later regulatory actions, APHIS released Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, and Oklahoma from quarantine. By 2003, only Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas remained under regulation.

Since 2000, APHIS has worked closely with the state departments of agriculture in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas; the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association; Arizona Cotton Research and Protection Council; the South Central New Mexico Cotton Boll Weevil Control Committee; the Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation; the National Cotton Council Pink Bollworm Action Committee; the Pink Bollworm Technical Advisory Committee; and other stakeholders.

The success of the area-wide pink bollworm program was due in large part to the integrated pest management approach that included mapping, detection, and control. APHIS and partners used mapping to identify the exact location of all cottons fields, and recorded and verified the cotton varieties being produced. They used delta traps baited with a 4 mg gossyplure pheromone to detect the pest. The program, in close coordination with cotton producers, used a combination of sterile insect technique and pheromone ropes to disrupt mating, plowdown of cotton plants to ensure a 60 day host free period, Bt transgenic cotton plants, and chemical pesticides as needed to control the pest in all cotton-producing areas.

For additional information concerning cotton-related programs, please contact National Policy Manager Karen Maguylo at 301-851-3128.