



**Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection Service**

4700 River Road  
Riverdale, MD 20737  
Voice 301-851-4100  
Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

# News Release

Contact:

Greg Rosenthal (301) 851-4054

[Gregory.J.Rosenthal@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Gregory.J.Rosenthal@aphis.usda.gov)

Suzanne Bond (301) 851-4070

[Suzanne.M.Bond@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Suzanne.M.Bond@aphis.usda.gov)

## **USDA Declares Two New York Counties Free of Plum Pox Virus**

Washington, Sept. 5, 2013 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced that plum pox virus (PPV) has been eradicated from Orleans and Wayne counties in New York. PPV, considered the most devastating viral disease of stone fruit worldwide, severely reduces crop yield and leaves fruit that is blemished and unmarketable.

Stone fruit species—or members of the genus *Prunus*—that are susceptible to PPV include almonds, apricots, cherries, nectarines, peaches and plums, among others. PPV also can infect wild and ornamental *Prunus* varieties such as Korean cherry (a.k.a., flowering almond or oriental bush cherry), black cherry (a.k.a. rum cherry or mountain black cherry) and American wild plum.

“Many years of diligent work have led to this success,” said Osama El-Lissy, Deputy Administrator of APHIS’ Plant Protection and Quarantine program. “We’re lifting federal quarantines in these two counties that had prohibited the planting of disease-vulnerable plants in a combined 24,000-acre area. It had also prohibited existing host plants and plant parts from moving out of regulated areas to other states. We could not have accomplished this eradication without the strong involvement of our partners, including the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, the Tuscarora Nation of New York, and the stone fruit industry.”

APHIS determined that the regulated areas met the criteria for deregulation based on 3 years of negative PPV survey results. These surveys included all orchards and residential properties with host plants within the regulated areas. The survey method included collection of leaves from host plants and testing for PPV.

Now that the federally regulated areas have been removed in the two counties, PPV-host trees of the genus *Prunus* can once again be planted for fruit or ornamental purposes. In addition, the interstate movement of regulated *Prunus* species plants and plant parts that originated in the previously regulated areas can now be moved interstate. However, State restrictions still apply in those areas. Specifically, PPV-host plant propagation, including

budwood collection and nursery plantings, will still be prohibited by New York state regulations.

Portions of New York's Niagara County will continue to be regulated and surveyed for PPV through a cooperative program. There were no positive detections of PPV in Niagara County in 2012 and to date in 2013.

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