



FY12 Update

November 4, 2011

Hello everyone!

As the team here at APHIS gets closer to finalizing preparations for the FY12 project suggestion open period, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you one of the biggest changes we're making to this year's process.

After reviewing the body of work either completed or initiated in the last 3 years and evaluating it against the goals and strategies originally put forth both in Section 10201 of the Farm Bill and the 2009 Implementation Plan, we realized that we are making great strides, but there's more work to be done to strengthen prevention, detection, and/or mitigation efforts. So, to help focus attention on those areas that represent a critical need or an unexplored opportunity, we will publish some very detailed and specific guidance to help stakeholders identify and develop project suggestions that address those needs or opportunities. It is our hope that this level of detailed guidance will not only reduce the overall number of project suggestions, but will focus potential project suggestions in areas of urgent priority and will result in a higher percentage of suggestions being funded.

For example, under Goal 1, we will provide a list of nationally-directed surveys in which we are seeking state participation, such as enhanced port environ surveys or commodity-based surveys. We will also provide an overview of the criteria that will be used to determine funding priorities for State-specific surveys. The criteria will emphasize surveys that target emerging pest threats or recently detected pests whose regulatory status has yet to be determined or surveys that address multiple pests.

Similarly, under Goal 5, we will provide guidance to stakeholders that will help focus project suggestions in areas that represent an important opportunity to strengthen our safety net through outreach and education. The areas of

recommended focus will range from joining forces with APHIS and other states to expand the Hungry Pests campaign – a national awareness initiative designed to educate the public about invasive pests and the role we all play in protecting U.S. agriculture and natural resources – to deploying local volunteer pest survey and detection efforts that engage people that work in and around warehouses and other areas where cargo and commodities are delivered or stored.

Currently all of the Farm Bill teams are developing this detailed guidance. We will be engaging representatives from the National Plant Board and other stakeholder groups to help refine and finalize this guidance in the near future. As I mentioned earlier, it's our hope that this type of guidance will help you develop project suggestions that ultimately will help us close the gap in areas where we see urgent needs or critical opportunities for improving pest prevention, detection, and/or mitigation efforts.

Dr. Matt Royer
Director, Pest Detection
Emergency and Domestic Programs
USDA APHIS PPQ
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