

Plant Pest Identification Notifications to State Departments of Agriculture
March 21, 2008
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Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Plant Protection and Quarantine
Plant Health Programs

Introduction

Timely notification of new plant pest[†], disease, or noxious weed identifications is critical for effective response planning, execution, and communications. Plant Protection and Quarantine's (PPQ) Plant Health Programs (PHP), Pest Detection & Emergency Programs (PDEP) staff is responsible for communicating presumptive and confirmatory pest identifications to internal and external parties. PDEP staff receives its pest identification information from the PPQ, PHP, National Identification Services (NIS) staff. This communication protocol applies to samples that were forwarded to NIS-recognized authorities because they were considered potentially actionable suspect samples (PASS) by the submitters. The communication protocol is intended to assure timely transmission of pest identification notifications, either by e-mail or telephone, to internal and external parties who coordinate actions that may include a possible response.

Notification Considerations

Notifications occur upon a *positive confirmation, negative determination, or inconclusive result* of pest identification. While NIS may use other officially recognized laboratory or expert identifiers to identify a pest, NIS will always be the direct link to PDEP for pest identification results; external labs or experts are not to communicate results directly to any entity except NIS.

The urgency and circulation of notifications may vary widely based upon the plant pest's regulatory significance and history. Accordingly, there are two primary questions to be asked to determine the circulation list for notifications within PPQ and to outside cooperators: (1) is this a new or significant pest detection, and (2) if not, is there a management/eradication program already underway in the United States?

Limiting Conditions

When conditions allow, PDEP will notify parties of identification confirmations within the hour if possible, and within 24 hours as a standard. PPQ wishes to strike a balance between notifying parties of all suspect samples (including potentially thousands of

* PPQ Diagnostic Notification to States v7.pdf; Last edit: December 29, 2014

[†] A pest is defined in ISPM 5: Glossary of Phytosanitary Terms, as "Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants or plant products [FAO, 1990; revised FAO, 1995; IPPC, 1997].

samples pending analysis by non-PPQ laboratories) to which it has been made aware, and notifying parties only of the most significant findings when confirmations are completed.

It is important to clarify that there will be situations where there is not enough information about a suspect plant pest detection to confirm the identity of the pest. Making this determination may take some time, based upon the biology of a pest and the availability of relevant scientific expertise and literature. For example, many plant pathogens can only be identified through molecular techniques. It also can be difficult to identify some insect pests in larval or pupal life stages. There may be situations where so little is known about an unidentified plant pest that new diagnostic protocols must be developed and validated to accomplish the identification.

While we believe that this notification protocol will broadly serve to ensure timely and effective notification of identification confirmations, it may not be applicable in all circumstances. In the event that they are not applicable, the protocol can be used as a basis for determining how best to communicate internally and externally under the given circumstances.

Notification Protocol

For both new pests and established program pests, the guide on the following pages identifies standardized subject lines and the individuals and points-of-contact who must receive notification from PDEP.

Notifications of pest identifications and diagnostic results are sent from NIS to the PHP Board of Directors, the Phytosanitary Issues Management (PIM) Directors, and the PDEP staff who will forward the notifications. Notifications are forwarded as in the tables that follow. *It is the responsibility of those receiving the notifications to further forward the message to those in their respective organization or agency that have a need to know, as well as to the submitting laboratory, identifier, or originator of the sample(s).*

Certain pests, when first detected, may have potentially significant impacts on trade. Accordingly, final positive confirmation may be handled at very high administrative levels. Communication under these circumstances is held at extremely high confidence and further communication may not be allowed unless the recipient of the message is authorized to do so.

Please note that the information contained in these notifications is confidential, for your information only, and should not be shared with or forwarded to those outside of the affected state.

TABLE 1: Subject Heading and Distribution for Pest Identification and Diagnostic Results

If the message is to communicate the status of a pest that is:	Then send the message:	And title the subject as:
Not new to the U.S.	To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Policy Manager, PM ▪ National Operations Manager, FO ▪ SPHD of affected state ▪ SPRO of affected state CC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive Director, S&T ▪ Associate Directors, S&T ▪ Biological Control Coordinator, S&T ▪ Director Pest Management Programs, FO ▪ Director Detection & Response, FO ▪ NIS Domestic Diagnostic Coordinator, PM 	CONFIRMED ID / CONFIRMED NEGATIVE / INCONCLUSIVE: x samples positive/negative/inconclusive for <i>genus species</i> , common name (or abbreviation) from state (two-letter code). In body of the message, say: “Please forward to the appropriate laboratory/identifier, originator, and/or submitter of the sample/specimen.”
New to US or Not new to the US, but a significant detection in a new state	To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pest Evaluation & Response Coordinators, PM ▪ National Operations Manager–New Pests, FO ▪ SPHD of affected state ▪ SPRO of affected state CC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PPQ Management Team ▪ PHP Board of Directors ▪ Associate Directors, S&T ▪ Biological Control Coordinator, S&T ▪ PPQ Intergovernmental Relations ▪ PPQ Outreach & Communication ▪ LPA Public Affairs Director ▪ NPB President & Executive Secretary ▪ NPAG ▪ Director Pest Management Programs, FO ▪ Director Detection & Response, FO ▪ NIS Domestic Diagnostic Coordinator, PM 	CONFIRMED ID: x samples positive for <i>genus species</i> , common name (or abbreviation) from state (two- letter code) – New US/State Record In body of the message, say: “Please forward to the appropriate laboratory/identifier, originator, and/or submitter of the sample/specimen.”

Subject Line Examples

Subject: CONFIRMED ID: one sample positive for *Xyleborus glabratus*, Red bay ambrosia beetle, from Lincoln Parish, LA

Subject: CONFIRMED ID: one sample positive for *Duponchelia fovealis* (Crambidae) in PA - new state record

Subject: CONFIRMED NEGATIVE: six samples negative for *P. ramorum* from IN

Subject: INCONCLUSIVE: two samples inconclusive for HLB from LA

Subject: CONFIRMED ID: two samples positive for *Chrysodeixis chalcites* (Noctuidae) Golden-twin spot moth in samples from MI - new US record