



### WHO USES IPHIS?

Do you know which programs and offices have entered the most survey activities in IPHIS in 2013?

#### Top 5 Programs (records):

1. Citrus Health (587,000+)
2. European Grape Vine Moth (433,000+)
3. Emerald Ash Borer (68,000+)
4. Gypsy Moth (52,000+)
5. Grass Hopper/ Mormon Cricket (32,000+)

#### Top 5 Offices:

1. California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) – Fresno District
2. PPQ – Avon Park, Florida
3. PPQ - Haines City, Florida
4. CDFA – Kern County
5. PPQ – Arizona State Plant Health Director's office

October 2013

### Past, Present, and Future

**Migration:** In early June, IPHIS moved to the NITC cloud. Although the move caused some hiccups, system performance has improved over the past 6-8 weeks. Calls to the IPHIS help desk have returned to pre-migration levels and users are experiencing fewer delays during the upload/validate process. Close monitoring and nightly reboots will continue until more permanent fixes are implemented.

**UAT:** The Operations & Maintenance (O&M) team has built a new IPHIS User Acceptance Testing (UAT) site that will allow us to test changes and new releases before they are implemented on the live (production) site. The UAT will be available to users as soon as the eAuthentication component is enabled (delayed due to govt. shutdown). Tentative completion date: end of October

**ArcGIS:** The O&M team is re-installing and upgrading ArcGIS. The upgrade will eliminate some of the upload bottlenecks that users have experienced since the migration. It will also restore the Mapping module so users can filter and display survey, sample, and regulatory data on the map. The upgrade has been installed on the UAT. Once fully tested, it will be implemented on the production site. Projected completion: mid/late November

**Enhancements:** Last but not least, we are moving forward on some long awaited system enhancements and improvements. During the

first week of September, the first of two Development, Modernization, and Enhancement (DME) teams started rewriting the upload process. When completed, the process will be broken into 3 steps: upload the file, extract the data, validate and process the data. Spreadsheets will no longer have a 400 record limit, the system will be more forgiving of spreadsheet style changes (column widths, cell background color, etc.), and users won't need to wait for data to process before logging off or uploading another file. Projected completion date (available for testing on UAT): Dec. 1

On Oct. 3, the second DME team began working on an Application Programming Interface (API)\*. The API will be the foundation for uploads, mobile solutions, and future system-to-system data transfers. Projected completion date: end of November.

\* An API is a set of commands, functions, and protocols which programmers can use when building software for a specific operating system. The API allows programmers to use predefined functions to interact with the operating system, instead of writing them from scratch. (Source: <http://www.techterms.com/definition/api>)

**Next on the list for the DME teams:** See the Milestones and Tentative Timelines below.

## **The Enhancement Planning Process**

Over the past few years, IPHIS users submitted hundreds of suggestions for improving the system. The recommendations came from calls/emails to the help desk, the State Plant Health Director's 'IPHIS Issues and Concerns Report', and comments made during weekly/bi-weekly webinars. Suggestions were reviewed by the Change Control Board and ranked as high, medium, or low priority based on whether the proposed change: 1) was needed by a program/office to successfully manage their data, or 2) improved system efficiency or provided a more user friendly interface for a majority of users.

Because of contracting/funding delays and the restructuring of IT governance, the CCB used a different approach for the latest round of proposed enhancements. Enhancements in the upcoming releases are tied to our milestones (targeted areas for improvement) that were developed in conjunction with the IT-Executive Steering Committee. Instead of the piecemeal approach used in the past, the CCB evaluated change requests based on the targeted feature/function (for example, the data upload process). The proposed enhancements were prioritized and the development team will include as many changes as possible with each new release.

## **IPHIS Training**

We are working with the PDC to develop more effective training strategies and to improve our design, development, and delivery of training materials. Planned interventions include: performance based training, process job aids, an updated Help Manual, targeted surveys, and program feedback. Watch for training announcements in the coming months as new processes, features, and functions are built into the system.

## Milestones and Tentative Timelines

Milestone	Description & Delivery
One	<b>Improve the Data Upload Process: In progress</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate the Upload step from the Validate &amp; Process step so users can upload one spreadsheet after another. Separating the processes will reduce idle wait time from 20 minutes or more to less than 5 minutes.</li> <li>• Provide a more efficient way to correct and process invalid records.</li> <li>• Lift the 400 record per spreadsheet limit for data uploads.</li> <li>• Associate the uploaded file with the field technician who collected the data</li> </ul> <b>Expected Delivery: Early December</b>
Two	<b>Replace the Existing Mobile Solution</b>
	Build an API and web interface to support mobile solutions that meet our requirements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility, ease of use, data standardization, synchronization and validation, disconnected editing, mapping, and GPS precision.</li> </ul> <b>Expected Delivery of API: Early December</b>
Three	<b>Provide Quicker and Easier Access to Data</b>
	Improve the user's ability to see and export their data (standard and custom attributes) through filtering, standard reports, and ad-hoc reporting. <b>Targeted Delivery: Mid-February</b>
Four	<b>Revamp the Lab Management Module</b>
	Provide labs with the same filtering, reporting, and bulk upload tools that other IPHIS users can access; the goal is to create a more complete record – including lab determinations. <b>Targeted Delivery: Mid-February</b>
Five	<b>Enable Data Access per Policy</b>
	Allow all users to access the data they need to make good management decisions; ensure that actual access aligns with the data access policy. <b>Targeted Delivery: Mid-March</b>
Six	<b>Revamp the Samples Module</b>
	Remove sample management barriers by: increasing speed and efficiency of the Samples module, improving filter capabilities, allowing for better tracking, and enabling printable forms. <b>Targeted Delivery: Early May</b>