Idaho Potato Cyst Nematode Cooperative Program Update
USDA/APHIS Plant Protection & Quarantine
Idaho State Department of Agriculture

Background

Situation Summary

On April 19, 2006, officials of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) announced the detection of potato cyst nematode (PCN), *Globodera pallida*, a major pest of potato crops. This was the first detection of the pest in the United States.

Potato Cyst Nematode

The goals of APHIS and ISDA in the Potato Cyst Nematode Response and Recovery Program are to:

- Prevent the spread of PCN
- Delimit the current infestation
- Eradicate the infestation
- Restore lost foreign markets
- Preserve current markets.

Agricultural Threat

Potatoes and tomatoes are the principal economically significant crops attacked by PCN. At high population levels, PCN will greatly reduce potato yields.

Statewide Survey

The PCN Program is soliciting participation in a statewide survey. This survey, part of an ongoing delimiting survey for PCN, helps meet the program’s objective of restoring foreign markets and maintaining current markets by using testing data to show that most Idaho growing areas are free of PCN.

The Program is seeking volunteers, particularly in those counties where we have not yet met our goals for ‘07 to sign up for survey.

The survey protocol for statewide survey is to collect three 5 pound soil samples per acre from 10 percent of a field’s perimeter. For example, from a 100-acre field, program staff would collect 3 samples per acre from 10 acres of the field’s border.

All samples collected are sent to an approved laboratory for diagnostic testing. Results are released only to the owners and/or operators of the field.

Control Measures

APHIS and ISDA have implemented a regulatory program designed to prevent the pest’s spread to other fields. The program defines restrictions on the movement of plants and soil, required sanitation procedures for equipment and limitations on planting.

APHIS and ISDA scientists have developed a PCN pest eradication program including soil sampling, soil treatments, planting and managed cultivation to ensure the continued vitality of agriculture in Idaho.

PCN infestations may be associated with patches of poor growth. Affected potato plants may exhibit yellowing, wilting, or death of foliage, but these symptoms have not been noted in Idaho.

If you have questions please call the
PCN Program Office at 208-522-2431.