

## Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) Stakeholder Update

11/30/07

### 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. The nematode cysts were detected during a routine survey of tare soil at an ISDA grader facility in eastern Idaho. Subsequent 2006 surveying to determine the possible origin and distribution of the pest in Idaho confirmed seven PCN positive fields, all located in close proximity, within Bingham and Bonneville Counties, Idaho. In response to the detection, Canada, Mexico and Korea shut off importation of potatoes from Idaho, while Japan cut off importation of potatoes from the entire U.S. The positive fields and an area surrounding the fields were placed under a Federal Domestic Quarantine Order and parallel State Rule establishing restrictions on planting and movement of certain regulated articles from Idaho in order to prevent the spread of PCN.

A trace of seed sources for the positive fields did not yield any evidence that seed was the source of infestation. Over 90% of the 2006 Idaho certified seed potato crop was surveyed and found negative for PCN. Other sources of introduction such as imported farm equipment, nursery stock, foreign flower bulbs, and other soil bearing items were investigated without providing any leads as to the origin of the infestation. In 2006 over 35,346 soil samples were analyzed from 282 production fields, 491 seed potato fields, and 56 facilities. As a result of the extensive surveying, negative test results and the regulatory actions of USDA and ISDA, Canada and Mexico reopened their markets to Idaho potatoes with some restrictions. Japan allows potatoes from the U.S. except for Idaho provided the product is not from Idaho seed.

In 2007 ISDA and USDA initiated a program to treat fields which have tested positive for PCN. The program includes pre-treatment sampling, fumigation, and post treatment sampling for up to two treatments per year. The ISDA contracts with growers for activities related to eradication of PCN from infested fields including access, tilling, irrigation and maintaining a biofumigant planting at a fixed cost per acre. The first fumigation process was completed in May 2007. A bio-fumigant oil radish planted on the fields added an additional measure of control and prevented soil erosion over the summer months. The oil radish plants were tilled into the fields to replenish organic matter and rejuvenate the soil and release a compound which is toxic to the nematodes. No crops were grown for harvest in the infested fields in 2007. A total of 9,478 pretreatment samples were collected from the seven infested fields. The second fumigation treatment was completed in August 2007. 11,681 post treatment samples were collected and will be analyzed prior to the next fumigation preparation date. The analysis will demonstrate the rate at which the viability of the nematode cysts is declining after each eradication treatment.

On November 1, 2007 a Federal Interim Rule and Idaho State Rule went into effect, providing the framework for continued protection of Idaho and U.S. potato interests. Successful survey, regulatory and eradication activities since the initial detection in 2006 have facilitated some regulatory relief in Idaho while forwarding the program objectives of: preventing the spread of PCN, delimiting the current infestation of PCN, eradicating PCN, restoring lost potato markets, maintaining existing potato markets.

Approximately 5000 acres regulated by the Federal Order in August of 2006 were released from regulated status. Additionally, corn and small grain were removed from the list of regulated articles. Peas and beans were added to the list of regulated articles.

In an effort to provide the best protection possible to the potato production and marketing system, approximately 125 fields have been added to the regulated area in parts of Bingham, Bonneville, and Jefferson Counties. These fields are known to have been farmed by an operator the same year as he farmed one of the infested fields during the past 10 years and had at least one crop of potatoes during the past ten years.

Regulated articles will require either a limited permit or a certificate to move from the regulated areas. Equipment moving from regulated areas may be required to be cleaned. Cleaning can be done by USDA or by private parties, but USDA or Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) must certify the cleaning. Based on a sequence of surveys, areas can be released from regulation. For low risk fields, one single survey with negative results can qualify equipment to move from the surveyed field without cleaning. Complete deregulation of fields requires at least two negative surveys taken by USDA or ISDA with at least a ten month interval between surveys.

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### UPDATES AND RELATED INFORMATION:

- During the week of November 26, PPQ surveyed potato fields in lower elevations of southwest Idaho for PCN. Progress on the 2007 delimiting survey in Idaho includes collection of over 27,000 samples from production fields and over 5,000 samples from seed potato fields. Additionally, PPQ has collected over 21,000 samples from the seven infested fields to monitor the efficacy of the eradication program in those fields.
- On November 28, APHIS confirmed PCN in one additional field in Bingham County, Idaho as a result of continued intensive sampling. This represents the eighth field infested with PCN in the regulated area in Idaho. The field has been regulated since August 28, 2006 under the Federal Order, Interim Rule, and Idaho State Rules covering PCN in Idaho. The field is approximately 145 acres in size and is adjacent to two of the other infested fields. The field's status will be changed from "Associated" to "Infested", and APHIS will include the field in the PCN eradication program.