

Pale Cyst Nematode (*Globodera pallida*) Eradication Program- Idaho Falls, Idaho

2015 1st Quarter Report (January-March)

Background

Pale cyst nematodes (PCN), *Globodera pallida*, are soil-borne organisms that do not infest potato tubers. The pests infest feeder roots, where the females attach, feed, and become sedentary. Nematodes reproduce sexually. Females form cysts containing 200 to 600 eggs, which can stay dormant for up to 30 years while the eggs inside remain viable. On host plants, large numbers of PCN can cause wilting, stunted growth, poor root development, and early plant death. If left uncontrolled, PCN can reduce yields up to 80 percent in potato fields. Even with only minor symptoms showing on the foliage, PCN can significantly reduce tuber size. PCN spreads primarily by the transport of cysts in soil. This may occur with the movement of soil on farming, construction, and other equipment; infested soil adhering to seed potatoes and other regulated crops; and any other items or means of transport such as water.

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 PCN, 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 grading facility in eastern Idaho. Subsequent 2006 surveying to determine the possible origin and distribution of the pest in Idaho confirmed seven PCN-infested fields totaling 911 acres, all within a one mile radius in Bingham and Bonneville Counties, Idaho. The PCN-infested fields and an area surrounding the fields were placed under a Federal Domestic Quarantine Order and parallel State Rule in August 2006, establishing restrictions on movement of certain regulated articles from Idaho in order to prevent the spread of PCN.

As a result of continued intensive soil sampling since 2007, an additional nineteen PCN-infested fields have been found. All 26 known infested fields lay within a 7.5 radius spanning parts of northern Bingham and southern Bonneville Counties, Idaho. The fields associated with them through shared tenancy, farming practices, equipment, and/or shared borders have been extensively surveyed and regulated. Since program inception, approximately 52,500 acres have been regulated due to their infestation or association with an infested field. Non-infested, associated fields have been eligible for federal deregulation following a sequence of soil surveys with no PCN detections. To date, 44,700 acres have been released from federal regulation; however, some of that acreage was re-regulated due to a new association(s) with an infested field(s). Currently, 10,316 acres are regulated, of which 2,897 acres are infested.

Eradication treatments in PCN-infested fields have been ongoing since the spring of 2007 and have included methyl bromide fumigation, Telone II fumigation, and planting of biofumigants. Testing of the soil in infested fields indicates the average viability of eggs within the PCN cysts has declined by more than 99% since eradication treatments began. To date, thirteen infested fields have triggered the greenhouse bioassay stage of evaluating eradication progress when viable eggs were no longer detected in cysts collected from those fields. Eight of the thirteen fields have also successfully completed greenhouse bioassay testing, enabling them to return to potato production with certain regulatory and survey requirements remaining in place. Greenhouse bioassays for the other fields are ongoing at the University of Idaho in Moscow.

General PCN Program information can be found at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/pcn>.

– Click on 'Regulated Fields Maps' under the heading "Quarantine Information" for a list of current and past regulated area maps.

– Click on 'PCN Regulations: 7 CFR 301.86' for the current Federal PCN rule, revised as of January 1, 2010.

Survey Information

Type of survey	Idaho soil samples collected		
	1 st Quarter of 2015	2015 Year to date	Since program inception
Detection	0	0	224,658
Delimiting	1,316	1,316	250,540
Eradication	11,464	11,464	134,811
Total	12,780	12,780	610,009

Identification and Diagnostics

Type of survey	Samples processed by the Idaho PCN Laboratory		
	1 st Quarter of 2015	2015 Year to date	Since program inception
Detection	4,936	4,936	229,941
Delimiting	0	0	241,122
Eradication	12,014	12,014	99,050
Total	16,950	16,950	570,113

Type of survey	Samples processed at other Idaho laboratories	
	Idaho Food Quality Assurance Laboratory (2006-2009, now closed)	Idaho State Parma Research and Extension Center (2006-2009)
Detection	52,670	69
Delimiting	10,227	896
Total	62,897	965

Program Research

Research is ongoing at the University of Idaho (Moscow, Parma, and Aberdeen campuses) to develop biological control agents and biofumigants against PCN, to elucidate genetic PCN immunity pathways, evaluate the effectiveness of Litchi Tomato (LT) as a trap crop for PCN, and determine agronomics for growing LT in southeast Idaho. Additional information about U of Idaho PCN research can be found at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/cals/idahopcن>.

Work continues at ARS-Prosser to develop favorable LT traits to increase its appeal to growers for use as trap crop, produce LT seed for future field trials, and to identify and characterize PCN hatching factors in potatoes, LT, and other non-solanaceous plants.

Eradication Activities

In April, APHIS was made aware of a concern regarding the methyl bromide soil fumigant used to treat pale cyst nematode (PCN) infested fields. We are taking this concern very seriously and we immediately started to ascertain the facts related to this concern. Additionally, out of an abundance of caution and in regard for those who raised the concern, we decided not to use methyl bromide soil fumigation to treat PCN-infested fields this spring. We are working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and others to investigate this concern before resuming the use of methyl bromide soil fumigation in the PCN Eradication Program. Methyl bromide soil fumigation is just one of many techniques used in the PCN Eradication Program. The success of this program rests on its integrated pest management approach that includes soil movement restrictions and managed cultivation to effectively control PCN and ensure the continued vitality of agriculture in Idaho. APHIS will continue to keep growers and stakeholders informed of any decisions regarding the use of methyl bromide soil fumigation for the treatment of PCN.

Methyl bromide has been applied to PCN-infested fields annually in the spring (2007-2014) and was applied to one field in fall 2011. Telone II was applied in the late summer of 2007- 2008 and 2010-2011. Telone II was not used in 2009 due to a world-wide shortage of the chemical. Biofumigants with nematicidal activity were planted in the infested fields in the summers of 2007 (oil radish), 2008 (clover), and 2009 (arugula).

Litchi tomato, a trap crop for PCN, will be planted on three PCN-infested fields (132 acres) in 2015. This will be the first production-scale use of LT in Idaho.

Regulatory Actions

On April 6th, approximately 204 acres in Bingham County were added to the regulated area due to their inseparability from associated fields that were regulated on February 23. On April 27th, approximately 4 acres were released from regulation when additional information was provided to show no association with an infested field.

Regulatory Treatments

Treatment type	Regulatory Treatments (# of pieces of equipment)		
	1 st Quarter of 2015	2015 Year to date	Since program inception
Pressure Washed	306	306	17,502
Steam Sanitized	33	33	2,463
Total	339	339	19,965

Self-Certification Program

Treatment type	Regulatory Treatments (# of pieces of equipment treated by stakeholders participating in the self-certification program)		
	4 th Quarter of 2014*	2014 Year to date*	Since program inception*
Pressure Washed	206	206	3,329

*Self-certification data lags one quarter behind all other Program data in order to provide a stakeholder reporting period.

Regulatory Documentation

Documentation type	Regulatory Documentation		
	1 st Quarter of 2015	2015 Year to date	Since program inception
Certificate (PPQ 540)	148	148	9,017
Limited Permit (PPQ 530)	40	40	2,500
New compliance agreements	1	1	163

Impacts on Commerce

In response to the initial PCN detection in 2006, Canada, Mexico and Korea shut off importation of potatoes from Idaho, while Japan cut off importation of potatoes from the entire U.S. The Mexico and Canada export markets have both been re-opened with the exception of potatoes from PCN-regulated areas. Both require PCN soil surveys from origin fields. The Korea market was reopened in June 2010 with the exception of potatoes originating from Bingham and Bonneville Counties, Idaho. The Japan market remains closed to Idaho potatoes but negotiations are actively underway to re-gain market access. Because of extensive field surveys conducted throughout production areas in Idaho, all of which have been negative beyond the twenty-six infested fields, the general opinion by our trading partners is that potatoes produced outside regulated areas do not pose the biological risk for introduction of PCN.

Communication and Outreach

General PCN Program information can be found at: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/pcn>.

– Click on [Program Updates](#) for the latest stakeholder update, due in January 2015.

- On January 22nd, PCN researchers from University of Idaho (Moscow, Aberdeen, and Parma) and ARS (Corvallis, OR and Prosser, WA) provided a PCN research update at the Eastern Idaho Potato Conference in Pocatello, Idaho. The update focused on agronomics and control of litchi tomato (LT) in southeast Idaho conditions. PCN program staff provided an overview of PPQ's plan for planting, monitoring, and controlling LT in PCN-infested fields in 2015.
- On March 26th, PCN program staff conducted outreach at the Idaho Growers and Shippers Association (IGSA) Spring Membership meeting. The outreach topic was handling and remediating potato tare soil at packing houses, processing plants, and cellars prevent the spread of PCN and other pests and diseases.
- On April 9th PCN program staff provided a general PCN program update at the Twin Falls Lamb Weston facility.