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USDA Provides more than \$70 Million to Protect our Food Supply and Natural Resources from Invasive Pests and Diseases in 2024

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 6, 2024 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing over \$70 million in 374 projects through the Plant Protection Act's Section 7721 program. The work will strengthen the country's defenses against plant pests and diseases, safeguard the U.S. nursery system, and enhance pest detection and mitigation efforts. Universities, states, Tribal organizations, federal agencies, and others will manage these projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Jenny Moffitt, Under Secretary for USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs,

highlighted that these funds provide states, universities, tribal organizations, and partners nationwide the tools they need to protect U.S. agriculture, our natural resources, and food security. “With our partners throughout the country, these projects will help in the fight against invasive plant pests and diseases, protecting growers and creating more export opportunities for American products,” Moffitt said.

Out of the 374 projects funded this year, 353 are managed by the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program and 21 are supported through the National Clean Plant Network. The Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program projects are organized around specific [goal areas](#) that represent critical needs and opportunities to strengthen against, prevent, detect, and mitigate invasive pests and diseases. The National Clean Plant Network helps maintain the infrastructure needed for pathogen, disease, and pest-free-certified planting materials, benefiting U.S. specialty crop producers.

Some of the projects selected for funding this year include:

- Agriculture plant pest detector dog teams: \$6,265,992 allocated to California, Florida and nationally to support detector dog team training and maintenance for domestic pest detection;
- Tribal organization’s plant protection research, survey, outreach, and invasive pest mitigation efforts: \$1,545,290 in 6 states;
- National Honey Bee Survey: \$1,521,204 to support honey bee surveys in 41 states and territories.
- Box tree moth: \$890,137 to survey and protect American boxwoods from the invasive pest;
- Stone fruit and orchard commodities: \$1,045,748 to support pest detection surveys in 12 states, including Colorado, Massachusetts, New York, Texas, and Washington;
- Forest pests: \$1,240,130 for various detection tools, control methods development, and outreach to protect forests from harmful pests in 15 states, including Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Virginia;
- Sudden oak death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) and related species: \$1,068,589 in 17 states, including Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, and nationally for survey, research, mitigation, and outreach;

- Northern giant hornet research and eradication efforts: \$1,097,052 in Washington;
- Invasive defoliating moths: \$1,456,893 to support surveys and enhance identification technologies in 16 states, including Alaska, California, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada, and North Carolina; and
- Certified, disease-free citrus planting materials: \$1,759,935 to protect American nurseries and growers from economic losses caused by citrus plant diseases.

Since 2009, USDA has supported more than 5,520 projects and provided nearly \$870 million in PPA 7721 funding. These projects help USDA, and its partners quickly detect and respond to invasive plant pests and diseases.

USDA plans to allocate approximately \$11 million for rapid responses to invasive pest emergencies, addressing pests with high economic consequences. In the past, USDA has used these funds to respond quickly to threats like the box tree moth, spotted lanternfly, Asian longhorned beetle, and invasive fruit flies.

For more details, view the fiscal year [2024 Plant Protection Act's Section 7721 spending plans online](#) (538.89 KB).

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