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USDA Provides more than \$16 Million to Projects that Protect California Food Supply and Natural Resources

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WASHINGTON, February 6, 2024 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is allocating more than \$16 million to California as part of a nationwide effort to strengthen the country's infrastructure for pest detection, surveillance, and mitigation, as well as protect the U.S. nursery system. Through the authority of the Plant Protection Act Section 7721, USDA is providing more than \$70 million in funding this year. These funds will support 374 projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

"In 2021, California agricultural exports generated more than \$22 billion. The state has about 24 million acres in farmland, which last year generated more than \$55 billion in revenue. Protecting that industry is essential to maintaining a strong national agricultural economy," said USDA Under Secretary Jenny Moffitt.

These funds will support statewide projects covering a range of plant health and pest mitigation activities including, but not limited to:

- \$5 million to survey for invasive fruit flies;
- More than \$4 million to support agricultural detector dog teams, which search for destructive invasive plant pests in mail facilities receiving international

goods;

- More than \$3.3 million to support National Clean Plant Network foundation plant stocks free from economically damaging diseases;
- \$2 million to support state Emergency Plant Health Response teams managing outbreaks of exotic plant pests;
- \$800,000 for develop an Asian Citrus Psyllid Detector Canine Program for California and Arizona;
- \$430,000 to support a grape commodity survey;
- \$400,000 to survey for Asian defoliator moths;
- \$533,630 to develop integrated pest management tools to slow the spread of box tree moth in the U.S.;
- \$315,000 to develop a research nursery for quarantine plant pathogens; and
- \$240,000 for research on viruses in strawberry nursery production in the U.S.

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. They also help our country maintain the essential infrastructure in place that enables U.S. specialty crop producers to have access to healthy, certified disease-free plants.

View the fiscal year 2023 Plant Protection Act's Section 7721 spending plans online: www.aphis.usda.gov/ppa-projects.

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