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# **USDA Provides more than \$1.4 Million to Projects that Protect North Carolina Food Supply and Natural Resources**

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WASHINGTON, February 6, 2024 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is allocating more than \$1.4 million to North Carolina 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.

"Agriculture is North Carolina's top industry, made up of 45,000 farms, spanning more than 8 million acres. North Carolina agriculture contributes more than \$92 billion to the local economy. Protecting that industry is vital," said USDA Under

Secretary Jenny Moffitt. “These projects will help North Carolina protect its resources and its contributions to our national agricultural economy.”

These funds will support projects covering a range of plant health protection activities including, but not limited to:

- \$487,000 to support the National Clean Plant Network plant stocks for multiple crops;
- \$316,353 to conduct research on climate suitability and potential climate change impacts of high-risk pests;
- \$213,722 to continue developing pest impact assessments and data sheets;
- \$209,376 to support invasive-pest risk analysis focused on trade route pathways at risk of introducing invasive pests into the U.S.;
- \$193,183 to continue developing an automated early warning system to identify harmful insects from global sources; and
- \$132,434 to evaluate a biocontrol method to suppress wild spotted wing drosophila populations.

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 2024 Plant Protection Act’s Section 7721 spending plans online: [www.aphis.usda.gov/ppa-projects](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppa-projects).

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