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USDA Provides More than \$1.4 Million to Support Projects that Protect Pennsylvania 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 Pennsylvania 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.

"Pennsylvania farms span more than 7.3 million acres and the state's agricultural industry supports more than 593,000 jobs. In total, production agriculture and agribusiness contribute about \$132.5 billion to Pennsylvania's economy. Protecting Pennsylvania's agricultural industry is critical," said USDA Under Secretary Jenny

Moffitt. “These projects will help Pennsylvania protect its resources and contribute to keeping our nation’s agricultural economy strong.”

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

- \$400,000 for spotted lanternfly outreach and education to raise public awareness about the pest in the state;
- \$349,500 to support surveys to protect the orchard, grape, solanaceous, stone and small fruit commodities, and to detect invasive defoliating moths in the state;
- \$111,257 to develop modeling to predict how plant communities of varying plant species may support spotted lanternfly across its life stages;
- \$140,000 to enhance and develop new nursery stock certification programs; and
- \$76,384 to conduct forest pest outreach to educate Pennsylvania residents about invasive forest pests to help prevent their introduction and spread throughout the state.

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.

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