



Annual National CAPS Committee Meeting

February 7 – 9, 2017

Kika de la Garza Federal Building

McAllen, Texas

Travel Information



The Pest Detection Program supports APHIS' goal of safeguarding U.S. agricultural and environmental resources by ensuring that new introductions of harmful plant pests and diseases are detected as soon as possible, before they have a chance to cause significant damage. The program uses a multi-pronged strategy to accomplish its mission, involving a structured, transparent assessment process to identify pest threats, the development of scientifically sound pest diagnostics and survey protocols, conducting the actual pest surveys, and the timely reporting of pest survey results through the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS). These efforts are accomplished by involving stakeholders and the scientific community, and leveraging efforts by other Agencies in USDA, government entities, State departments of agriculture, universities, and industry partners. The Agency and its State cooperators carry out surveys for high-risk pests through the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) Program, which is funded through the Pest Detection line item. The Pest Detection Program also leverages funding through the Farm Bill Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program, Goal 1 Survey, to accomplish its goals.

The National Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) Committee (NCC) meets annually to discuss the performance of the Pest Detection/CAPS program, and to discuss and update the CAPS National Survey Guidelines. The NCC also will discuss the implementation of any changes that may be needed to the Program and Guidelines based on issues raised during the previous survey year as a result of discussions with the various representatives' constituency. The annual meeting provides a forum to obtain input on the direction of the CAPS Program from those in the field, is an avenue to inform the States of new initiatives and survey and data guidelines, and is a means to alert our state cooperators of any plant pest threats and PPQ policy direction that may be on the horizon. The annual meeting also provides a forum for discussions among PPQ and State personnel and the Farm Bill Program that may well lead to major changes in the CAPS and Farm Bill Program's business models.

The meeting will be hosted by the PPQ office in McAllen, Texas, and held at their offices at the Kika de la Garza Federal Building, 1101 E Hackberry Ave, McAllen, TX 78501.

The meeting will start at 8:00 am and go until 5:00 pm each day, Tuesday through Thursday, February 7 - 9, 2017. Suggested travel days are Monday, February 6 and Friday, February 10, 2017.

The local airport is [McAllen Miller International Airport](#) (MFE). Most flights connect through Dallas or Houston. McAllen is serviced by American and United airlines.



A block of rooms has been reserved at the [Homewood Suites by Hilton McAllen](#), 3801 Expressway 83, McAllen, Texas, 78503, USA, at the federal per diem rate of \$94 per night. Rooms can be reserved by calling the Homewood Suites at (956) 630-0500 and reference the group 'USDA.' The block will be held until January 20, 2017. As usual, folks will need to call and make their own reservations with their own credit card.

The hotel is 1.5 miles (5 minutes) from McAllen Miller International Airport. A courtesy van looks to be available at no charge. Taxis are \$10 from the airport.

The hotel is located 5.1 miles from the Kika de la Garza Federal Building (10 minutes w/o traffic). GOVs will be available for transportation to the meeting location.

Travel expenses for state employees will be reimbursed through the National Plant Board. Contact Aurelio Posadas for information at (916) 709-3484, or via email at aureliop@elkgrove.net.

Lunch plans are yet to be determined. Plan to bring cash for lunch in case we order in.

During the days of February 6-10, 2016, the high temperature in McAllen ranged from 67 to 79°F and the low ranged from 41 to 49°F.

<http://www.usclimatedata.com/climate/mcallen/texas/united-states/ustx0854/2016/2>