



NCC Conference Call - Tuesday, July 1, 2008

Minutes

Participants

Matt Royer	Susan Schechter
John Bowers	Eileen Luke
Brian Kopper	Kennoth Carnes
Dan Fieselmann	Tom Sandoe
Benny Graves	Adam Silagyi
Jeff Knight	Erin Stiers
Vicki Smith	Melinda Sullivan
Robert Dahl	Kim Schwartzburg
Kathy Handy	Lisa Jackson
Todd Schroeder	Christina Jewett
	Kelly Mitchell

National

National CAPS Meeting

- After our conference call, we talked with Paul Eggert in the Deputy Administrator's Office regarding the Decision Memo for the National CAPS Meeting, and this is the current status. The CAPS meeting is a PPQ-sponsored event with a high dollar amount, as such, it needs higher level approval. The Decision Memo is still in Paul's office, and before it is sent forward, he wants to determine if it needs strengthening in order to optimize approval at the higher levels. The Memo will be reviewed at HQ by several Offices, and modified if necessary, before it is sent forward. In an earlier email to the NCC, I indicated that we were asked to cut back on meeting cost and attendance estimates. We revised and submitted our estimates, but I believe that the Decision Memo will go forward with our original attendance and cost estimates. This process may take a couple more weeks before we receive final approval. The background is that the Department is tightening up its approval of travel and sponsored meetings in response to Congressional concerns. We are not in crises mode yet, and are proceeding with the idea that the meeting will take place. There is progress, it is just slow this time around.
- There has been some questions regarding the hotel contract. Everything is fine. The contract holds a spot for us. The language in the contract states if the meeting is not approved, i.e., no funds made available, then we are not liable, and it will not cost PPQ. The contract is something that we needed to have in place before we sent the Decision Memo up the chain. It is just the way things work.
- We are continuing to work with Tom Scott at the PDC, our facilitator, on the agenda for the meeting. We have gone back and forth, but should have a draft framework for the NCC to review shortly.



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NCC Meeting - July 29-31, 2008

- Since the conference call, there have been some significant updates. The NCC will meet July 29-31, 2008, at the Professional Development Center in Frederick, MD to draft an outline of a strategic plan and develop a business plan in response to the 2008 Farm Bill. Potential participants outside the NCC also have been invited based on their expertise and contributions to the discussions.
- The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, otherwise known as the Farm Bill, recently became law. In section 10201, Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention, language has been inserted that directs the Secretary to make available Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funds for early detection and rapid response of pest threats. The 5-year Farm Bill specifies that these funds are to be made available incrementally, starting with \$12 million in FY09, \$45 million in FY10, and \$50 million in FY11 and thereafter. This information is publically available. Pest Detection has been charged, in consultation with the Plant Board and other interested parties, with developing a business plan with funding objectives. The National CAPS Committee, representing both Federal and State constituencies throughout the U.S., is ideally suited to take the lead in discussions and the building of a business plan. This meeting will have high visibility within APHIS and PPQ.
- The development of a business plan for Pest Detection in response to the Farm Bill is perfectly in line with our need to develop a vision of the future for the CAPS program. As mentioned earlier, we need to provide a draft of what we as the NCC see as the vision of CAPS and Pest Detection before the December CAPS meeting, instead of having the vision as an open-ended question. Before a business plan can be developed, however, we will need to have a firm grasp of the goals and objectives of the program over the same 5-year period, i.e., our strategic plan. The development of a business and strategic plan will give a basis on which to discuss goals, objectives, funding, milestones, and time lines.
- The CCC funding that Pest Detection may receive covers a lot more than just the CAPS program. CAPS is just a part of the Pest Detection funding and program. As such, while we may be able to increase funding to the States for surveys, there also are other aspects, projects, and initiatives in Pest Detection that warrant increased funding. These ultimately support CAPS in a variety of ways. The meeting at the end of the month will go a long way on guiding us on how we plan to spend the CCC money. There also are some political concerns. At this point, all we can say is that here is the Farm Bill, it is publicly available, section 10201 pertains to pest detection, and we are going to have a meeting to plan on how we are going to address the provisions in the Farm Bill.

Traps & Lures

- The Trap Supplies database is being prepared to accept orders for 2009. An announcement will be sent through the NCC and the CAPS listserve to inform the CAPS community when the database will be open for business.



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EWB/BB document

- The update of the EWBBB manual is in progress (see minutes for 6/5/08).

2008 Surveys/Work Plans

- In reviewing work plans for 2008, some common spelling errors for scientific names were encountered, even the National Pests of Concern and some commodity documents contained errors. As we review our lists, please insure that those submitting work plans for 2009 check on the spellings of pest names, especially the scientific names, and not assume that previous year's versions are correct.
- States are surveying for EWB/BB pests that have been identified as pests for which negative data cannot be entered based on the standard EWB/BB traps. We published the guidelines with the 2009 Survey Guidelines (Appendices M-1 and M-2). The question discussed was do we implement the negative data guidelines in 2008? We agreed that while the States should be conscious of the guidelines and follow them, we should not block non-validated negative data at data entry until the 2009 season. We will work with NAPIS to develop rules and a warning message when a State attempts to enter negative data for a pest for which it is not valid according to the survey method used.
- States should be aware that the survey method for some pests is visual observation, as no traps or lures are known at this time. While these pests should not be entered as negative based on any trap or lure, they can be entered as valid negative data if the parameters of the visual survey were followed.

ER, WR

ISIS/NAPIS document

- The WR and ISIS team are developing a document on the process to make an NAPIS-compliant template for ISIS. This document is currently undergoing an internal review, and will be shared with the NCC for comment shortly.

CPHST

AHP model changes

- The NCC approved through consensus the proposed changes to the AHP model for 2010 as described previously (see minutes for 6/5/08). The NCC requested a listing of ranked pests for the old model and the new model to help gauge the effect the changes made to the output of the model.
- There was some discussion on the need to limit the number of new pests to the AHP list to five. CPHST sent a list of 10 pests for consideration. Before forwarding the list to the NCC, I requested that CPHST prepare a short paragraph on each pest to help the NCC decide which pests to add. This will be forwarded to the NCC as soon as it arrives.



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Commodity documents

- The Soybean documents are currently being updated and revised. All endemic pests will be deleted, and all pests from the 2009 pest list included. In addition, the formatting will be changed to match that of the Grape and Small Grains documents. These changes should significantly reduce the number of pages in the manual and make it more user-friendly. There are at least ten pests that were considered national threats (exotic to the United States and a significant pest of soybean). These pests are being re-assessed to determine if they will be included in the new draft. If anyone knows of any other changes that are needed, please contact Melinda Sullivan in Ft. Collins. The revised manual should be available in August.
- The Grape and Pine Survey Guidelines will be posted to the CAPS website soon.
- The Corn Reference is still in progress and on track.
- There was a request from Dan Fieselman for the NCC to consider a potato commodity survey, to be funded with year-end money. After much discussion (see below) the NCC recommended that CPHST pursue funding for a potato survey. Dan has since reported that funding was approved, and that a cooperator has been identified to produce the Reference and Guidelines documents. It is not known at this time whether the Potato Commodity-based Survey will be available for 2010.
- Much of the discussion around the potato commodity survey, and this pertains to the other commodity-based surveys as well, was industry buy-in. Industry is very reluctant to support these commodity-based surveys. Some of the comments that were expressed were along the lines of: something has to be in it for them, they need a buy-in; industry is not sold on the benefit of looking, and then finding something; there is mitigation anxiety (especially with their experience with PCN and GN) and a need of guaranteed federal assistance; industry needs an upside and rationale for these surveys; and, there is a reluctance to have any movement through the fields. It is obvious that our whole commodity-based survey system needs to be strongly promoted. The NCC suggested that the new potato documents contain a section in the beginning that states a strong case, rationale, and benefit for the survey. While the potato industry may not readily accept the survey, the Potato Commodity-based Survey documents could be used as the base for a strong outreach program that will enable us to partner with industry in exotic pest surveys. This was the rationale of the NCC to approve the potato survey. The NCC recognizes the importance of developing a strong outreach program with the goal of a cooperative survey effort with the various commodity industries.

Survey and diagnostic matrix

- The updated survey and diagnostic matrix for CAPS pests is ready, and will be available on the CAPS website in the next week or so.



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Other

- Russ Bullock has been selected as the National Science Program Manager for Response & Recovery Systems Technology.

NAPIS

Updates

- The Pine and Grape Reference documents are posted on the CAPS website.
- The diagnostic laboratories and codes are being updated. Please review the labs in your state to make sure everything, contacts, etc., are up to date. Contact Susan with corrections.
- We reviewed the labs in Maryland due to the large number of federal labs, and have made some clarifications. A more detailed communication will come out over the CAPS listserv. Please note that a new code has been assigned to the NIS Molecular Diagnostic Lab, 3004. The code for the CPHST National Plant Germplasm and Biotechnology Laboratory is 0593, and the code for the ARS Systematic Entomology Laboratory (SEL), Communications & Taxonomic Services Unit is 0466, regardless of whether the individual is housed in Beltsville or Washington, DC. The 391 sent with the notification should indicate where the confirmation was done.

Next NCC call will be on Thursday, August 7, at 11:00 eastern time.

Note: A reminder to the NCC, please distribute CAPS updates, conference-call minutes, and other CAPS-related information to the constituency that you represent in a timely manner. Also, please bring their items, issues, concerns, and opinions back to the NCC for discussion. It is our responsibility that everyone is kept engaged in the CAPS program.