

Additional Guidance on Public Engagement

Public engagement activities are supported through CAPS Infrastructure agreements as a means to enhance the State Survey Coordinators' (SSC) communication about pests of concern with key stakeholders in their respective state(s). Public engagement activities may occur during routine survey planning and preparation, attendance at industry and stakeholder meetings, and learning workshops or seminars. Funding through Plant Protection Act 7721 Goal 5 may be an option worth considering, especially for larger projects.

The primary goal of states' public engagement programs is to use early detection activities to prevent new exotic plant pests from becoming established. This may be accomplished by coordinating targeted, ongoing surveys to support a timely and effective response if or when a pest is detected. Coordinating detection surveys and complementary public engagement activities strengthens statewide early detection efforts. Public engagement can be used to improve existing survey initiatives and support CAPS programs to identify exotic pest threats, determine and implement effective prevention, detection, and response to new exotic pests, and communicating risks and needs to land management personnel, relevant industries, and the public. States are encouraged to explore novel approaches to public engagement.

Local stakeholder groups should be contacted and encouraged to support CAPS program-related outreach activities. Consider providing training to volunteers and others who may have access to areas at risk of exotic pest introduction. Other partner groups to consider are local extension services, horticultural inspection services, and master gardeners.