
FY 2024
CAPS
Guidelines

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide direction to the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) program.

The CAPS program’s mission is to conduct exotic plant pest surveys through a national network of cooperators and stakeholders to protect American agriculture and natural resources.

National Priority Pest List

The 2024 [National Priority Pest List](#) has 102 pests; two pests were removed from the 2023 list. Cooperators should work with their State CAPS Committee to identify targets for survey work.

Table 1. Changes to the 2023 National Priority Pest List

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status
<i>Diabrotica speciosa</i>	Cucurbit beetle	Removed
<i>Heteronychus arator</i>	Black maize beetle	Removed

Funding for Surveys and Infrastructure

Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) provides funds to state departments of agriculture, designated plant health regulatory authorities, tribes, or universities through cooperative agreements to support CAPS surveys and infrastructure. PPQ’s Field Operations will execute these agreements. The funding level available for CAPS agreements increased 5.0% from fiscal year (FY) 2022 amounts. For FY 2024, **the maximum possible awards for both survey and infrastructure is the amount that each state received in FY 2022 plus 5%. If changes will be made to your funding formula, please communicate the changes to the SPHD and NOM.** For survey infrastructure, a specific written work plan must be provided (separate from survey work plans) as explained in the Work Plan Submission section below.

Surveys

CAPS surveys will primarily target pests on [National Priority Pest List](#) the Survey names must identify the pathway or crop/host as shown in appendix 1. In each named survey, 60% of the pests must be National Priority Pests, and the other 40% may include other pests of concern. For example, if a cooperator has 10 pests on a survey work plan, at least six pests must be from the National Priority Pest List.

No Cost Pests

Pests that are not on the National Priority Pest List but can be surveyed and identified without requiring additional funding or adding costs to the agreement can be added to work plans without counting towards the 40% pests of state concern. These pests will be indicated on the Survey Summary Form as “No Cost Pests.”

Example: A state is conducting a cyst nematode survey that includes several priority pests. Additional cyst nematode species of state concern may be surveyed and identified from the same soil sample that was taken for the priority pests. These other cyst nematode species can be included in the Survey

Summary Form and denoted “No Cost Pests” since they do not require additional funding to 1) collect the sample, or 2) process the sample to perform the identification.

Pathway Approach to Survey

Pathway surveys focus on areas that are at the highest risk for pest introductions because of their proximity or relationship to ports of entry such as wholesale distribution sites, rail yards, warehouse, markets, and other shipping risk points. This approach supports early detection before a pest reaches a potential establishment point. For example, moths listed in the Asian defoliator survey lay eggs on shipping containers and thus the containers should be targeted for surveys. Locations that store shipping containers from Asia are potential high-risk areas for new pest introductions. State CAPS Committees should identify risk points where National Priority Pests may be present.

Former Priority Pests

The [Former Priority Pest List](#) includes pests that PPQ removed from the National Priority Pest List. The list goes back to 2011 and links to the pest’s Approved Methods page. Cooperators can use this list to determine whether a former priority pest can be included in a CAPS survey.

Infrastructure Agreement

The infrastructure agreement supports the State Survey Coordinator’s (SSC) salary, fringe benefits, support equipment (phone, computer etc.), travel, and departmental overhead typical for this position.

Outreach

The CAPS program encourages cooperators to be creative with outreach to the public. Outreach funded by CAPS should focus on conveying information about National Priority Pests. Cooperators should consider metrics to measure the effectiveness of outreach including, but not limited to, increased access to property for the purpose of survey, proportion of industry visited, and new pest reporting. Currently, the accomplishment report includes the number of interviews conducted, publications developed, and outreach materials and publications distributed.

Host Matrix

The [Host Matrix](#) is a tool to build survey pest lists. It contains the priority pests cross-referenced by economically important hosts. The Host Matrix can be searched by pest or host. A search by pest results in a list of the major hosts of the pest while a search by host reveals each pest that causes significant damage to the host. It is publicly available on the [CAPS Resource and Collaboration](#) website as a searchable online table or a downloadable spreadsheet.

National CAPS Committee

The CAPS program works with a [National CAPS Committee](#) (NCC). The NCC is comprised of permanent PPQ employees from PPQ’s pest detection cross functional working group (PD CFWG) and rotating State and Federal members.

State CAPS Committee

At the state level, the State CAPS Committee will determine and recommend survey priorities for the state. Each State CAPS Committee is led by PPQ’s State Plant Health Director (SPHD) in collaboration with the State Plant Regulatory Official (SPRO), with support from the Pest Survey Specialist (PSS) and State Survey Coordinator (SSC). The SPHD and SPRO will determine appropriate membership and governance of the State CAPS Committee based on pests of concern. Cooperators develop workplans based on the advice of the State CAPS Committee and select pests that are important to their State and

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are in line with survey guidance. This collaboration allows flexibility on a state-by-state basis. Review the [NCC Roles and Responsibilities](#) and [Financial Plan Job Aid and Template](#) of the core constituencies - SPHD, SPRO, PSS, and SSC for more information.

FUNDING AND WORK PLANS

Overall Funding Formula

For FY 2024, **the maximum possible award for both the survey agreement and infrastructure agreement is the amount that each state received in FY 2022 plus 5%**. This means the funding formula for federal funds is:

$$\text{Infrastructure} + \text{Survey(s)} = \text{Total Federal Funds (not exceeding FY 2022} \times 1.05)$$

Cooperators can distribute the 5% increased funding to either or both agreements but may not reduce the funding amount of the survey agreement from FY 2022. Any remaining dollars of a state's total dollar amount are for surveys. Personnel expenses for conducting survey activities should be included in the survey work plans. Survey expenses are not allowed in survey infrastructure work plan or funding. An example of this formula is as follows:

State	Infrastructure	Survey	Total
XX (FY 2022 funding)	\$70,000	\$30,000	\$100,000
XX (FY 2024 funding = FY 2022 funding × 1.05)	\$73,000	\$32,000	\$105,000

Work and Financial Plan Submission

FY 2024 work and financial plans require cooperators to use the [templates](#). Cooperators will only enter financial plans into the [Online Work Plan Interface](#). Details on how to complete these items will be available on the [Work Plan Process for CAPS Survey](#). The Interface will open on July 31. Signed work plans are due to the PPQ Agreements SharePoint site by September 8, 2023.

Work Plan Options

Infrastructure work plans must be submitted as separate work plans from survey work plans. States continue to have the flexibility of combining their CAPS surveys into one combined work and financial plan or to submit separate work plans for each survey. PPQ prefers the combined work and financial plan option as it reduces administrative burdens on both the state and federal sides. Regardless of whether a state pursues a combined survey work plan or individual work plans, the SSC must fill out each survey with accompanying target pests separately in the Survey Summary Form. This will aid in reporting of program performance measures. See an [Example of a Combined Survey Work Plan](#).

Out of state travel

Out of state travel for the SSC (or other state cooperator) is capped at a total of \$3,000 per year and must be used for CAPS-specific meetings that the individual attends in the role of state CAPS representative (e.g., Regional Plant Board meeting). These costs will be captured in the Infrastructure Work Plan. It is strongly encouraged that travel to the Regional Plant Board Meeting be incorporated into the Financial Plan. Regional Plant Board meetings now host CAPS breakout sessions and SSCs should attend these meetings. A National CAPS meeting is not planned; do not include costs to attend a National CAPS meeting.

In-state travel

In-state travel to conduct surveys should be addressed in the survey work plan. Travel expenses for survey are not allowed in infrastructure funding. Other in-state travel needs should be clearly aligned with supporting the CAPS mission.

Supplies and Equipment

Cooperators making supply and equipment requests must demonstrate that CAPS survey work is directly supported by the requests. Equipment requests, like computer workstations and phone lines, should only support the SSC's needs. Additionally, cooperators and PPQ should work together to balance needs and replacement timeframes carefully. CAPS participants (Federal and State) must be good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Contractual Costs

Depending on the type of activity, some contractual items listed in the Financial Form must be described in an additional Contractual Financial Form. For clarification, if the cost is something simple like rent or paying for the identification of samples, the separate Contractual Financial Plan is not needed. When funds are received by one entity and passed through to another to perform all or a significant portion of the work, the Contractual Financial Plan is needed to document the specific costs. For an example Financial and Contractual Form, see the [Financial Plan Job Aid and Template](#).

Cooperator Cost Share

The CAPS program encourages states to leverage cost shares to enhance Federal funding in the cooperative agreement. If a cooperator chooses to enter a cost share amount on the financial forms, then they must adhere to guidance governing that cost share, and the amount should match the SF-425 at the end of the agreement.

Survey Supplies

PPQ will provide survey supplies (traps, lures, and accessories) for National Priority Pests surveyed through CAPS or Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program (PPA Goal 1 Surveys). There are two open periods for ordering supplies each year. The fall open period is for CAPS survey supplies. The winter open period is for PPA Goal 1 Survey supplies, and any remaining items needed for the survey season. Questions should be directed to the Pest Detection National Operations Manager of the cooperator's state, Darrell Bays (darrell.a.bays@usda.gov) for Central and Southern Plant Board states or Laurie Morales (laurie.m.morales@usda.gov) or Eastern and Western Plant Board states. Survey supplies for non-priority pests should be included in the financial plans and not in the survey supplies orders.

Preliminary Identification

There is no guarantee that taxonomic assistance for preliminary identification of priority pests will be available for all pests. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the cooperator to confirm that taxonomic arrangements for preliminary pest identification assistance are in place before work plans are submitted. Also, the cooperator is responsible for confirming that an identifier or institution that they have used previously is available to continue providing taxonomic support for the proposed targets each year.

If assistance is needed in finding an identifier or institution to provide preliminary identification for a target (**Priority Pests only**), please contact the Preliminary ID National Operations Manager for Pest Detection - Darrell Bays (darrell.a.bays@usda.gov). For other PPQ pest programs, reach out to the respective Pest Program National Operations Manager.

Submission of pests for Objective Prioritization of Exotic Pests (OPEP) consideration

Anyone can submit pests to be considered for addition to the National Priority Pest List. Pests will be evaluated through the OPEP process and then for survey and diagnostic feasibility. If the pest ranks high and has appropriate survey and diagnostic methods, it may be added to the National Priority Pest List.

Submit pests for consideration to: stcaps@usda.gov

APHIS is also seeking public feedback through the 2018 Farm Bill Section 12203(b) in support of building the Animal and Plant Diseases and Pests of Concern list. APHIS seeks comments on a rolling basis, and there is no deadline for submission. If suggesting additions or changes, please provide references/documentation on how the pest/disease meets the definition of “likely to pose a significant risk to the food and agriculture critical infrastructure” in your response. APHIS intends to review the list of animal and plant pests and diseases of concern on an annual basis and update the list as appropriate. APHIS reserves the right to update the list more frequently, as needed. Pests submitted to this process will also be submitted for an OPEP evaluation and may be added to the National Priority Pest List if the criteria are met.

Send your suggestions for additions or changes to APHISPestDiseaseList@usda.gov.

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

All cooperative agreements are administered through PPQ Field Operations.

The ezFedGrants web portal is used to process cooperative agreements. The ezFedGrants external portal homepage can be accessed by entering ‘grants.fms.usda.gov’ into a web browser. Cooperators will respond to an opportunity established by the PPQ Agreements Staff. This information will be communicated to the cooperator as described in ezFedGrants training and enable the cooperator to find the opportunity in ezFedGrants.

Aids and training are available on the [ezFedGrants](#) website.

As outlined in the Notice of Award between the cooperator and USDA APHIS PPQ, the cooperator’s designated representative shall submit all required documents in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

Also, as per the Notice of Award, the cooperator’s designated representative shall certify and submit to APHIS’ Authorized Representative a semiannual **Accomplishment Report** on activities outlined in the work and financial plans. The use of the standardized [Infrastructure Report Template](#) and [Survey Report Template](#) are **required** for all agreements as tools for reporting accomplishments.

Process:

- 1) The cooperator uploads the Federal Financial Report and Accomplishment Report to the ezFedGrants external portal homepage.
- 2) The Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative (ADODR) gets notified that the cooperator has submitted an accomplishment report in the ezFedGrants system. Once approved by the ADODR, the system notifies Field Operations that an accomplishment report is ready for

review.

- 3) The ADODR refers to the [CAPS Accountability Report](#) on the CAPS Resource & Collaboration website before signing off on the final Accomplishment Report to ensure the Accountability Report matches the information in the Survey Summary Form, and the cooperator has entered data into the National Agriculture Pest Information System (NAPIS). NAPIS data entry is an indicator of the fulfillment of the cooperative agreement.

A one time, no cost extension of the cooperative agreement may be granted for up to one year if requested by the cooperator before the expiration date, and if it is supported by the National Operations Manager, ADODR, PPQ Agreements Specialist, and approved by the PPQ Field Operations Associate Executive Director. Extension requests must provide an explanation or justification for the program's delay and will only be granted due to programmatic reasons or extenuating circumstances (e.g., weather delays, problems in hiring of personnel, other reasons) and should not be used simply to extend the agreement. Reporting frequency of the accomplishment and financial reports, either quarterly or semiannually, will continue as noted in the Notice of Award.

The ADODR of the cooperative agreement shall submit the Closeout/Evaluation Report to the PPQ Agreements Specialist no later than the 90-day period allowed for submitting the reports. The evaluation should include input from the PSS and address each funded project in the cooperative agreement. The evaluation depends upon the work plan and must address the funding criteria previously agreed to by the cooperator and the ADODR and the cooperator's performance in carrying out the goals of the agreement. The [Accountability Report](#), a work plan monitoring tool, is available to assist in the review of the cooperator's performance. **Cooperators must log in to access these tools at the [CAPS Resource & Collaboration](#) website.**

Please review the [Terms and Conditions for APHIS Awards](#) for information about cooperative agreements.

DATA MANAGEMENT

[NAPIS](#) is the final repository for all CAPS survey results. A system login is required and can be obtained from capis@purdue.edu.

Information about data entry can be found in the following documents:

- [Data Entry Roles and Responsibilities](#)
- [Data Entry Guides for Selected Taxonomic Groups](#)

Negative Data

The CAPS program has developed guidelines to assist in data entry of valid negative data. Valid negative data for National Priority Pests is defined as negative results from surveys using the pest's approved method. Valid negative data for pests of state concern is defined as negative results of surveys using a method likely to find the pest. The document [Approved Methodology for Negative Data](#) helps cooperators determine pests that can be considered negative for a survey effort based on the survey methodology, trap/lure combination, or other factors. Data entry will be validated by the system against the approved survey method for each pest on the National Priority Pest List.

Data for National Priority Pests not conforming to the approved method will not be accepted into

NAPIS.

Additional guidance for data entry can be found in [Data Entry Guides for Selected Taxonomic Groups](#) for selected target pests at the genus and species level. All positive records should be at the species level.

APPENDIX 1. Approved Survey Names

These survey names should be used and be relevant to the host or pest targeted.

Survey Names	
Asian Defoliator Survey	Nut Pest Survey
Berry Pest Survey	Oak Commodity Survey
Citrus Commodity Survey	Orchard Commodity Survey
Corn Commodity Survey	Palm Commodity Survey
Cotton Commodity Survey	Pathway Survey for Pests of Multiple Agricultural Systems
Cyst Nematode Survey	Pine Commodity Survey
Exotic Buprestid (Cerceris) Survey	Rice Pest Survey
Exotic Wood Borer/Bark Beetle Survey	Small Grains Commodity Survey
Field Crops Pest Survey	Solanaceous Commodity Survey
Forest Pest Survey	Soybean Commodity Survey
Fruit Crops Pest Survey	Specialty Crops Pest Survey
General Nematode Survey	Stone Fruit Commodity Survey
Grape Commodity Survey	Tree Fruit Pest Survey
Greenhouse Crops Pest Survey	Tree Nursery Pest Survey
Legume Pest Survey	Tropical Hosts Commodity Survey
Mollusk Survey	Vegetable Crops Pest Survey
Nursery and Ornamental Survey	