

USDA Provides Funding for Pest, Disease Management

WASHINGTON (USDA) — U.S. Department of Agriculture ([USDA](#) [1]) Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the allocation of \$48.1 million provided by the Agricultural Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill) to projects across the country that will help to prevent the introduction or spread of plant pests and diseases that threaten America's agriculture economy and the environment. The economic stakes for stopping invasive species are high, with scientists estimating the total economic cost of all invasive species to be approximately \$120 billion annually.

"Invasive pests cause billions of dollars in damage each year and endanger our nation's food security," said Vilsack. "The funds USDA is making available today will help partners and stakeholders develop strategies, products and treatments to safeguard our farms and natural resources from invasive threats."

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) sought project suggestions from states and U.S. territories, universities, federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, private companies and tribal organizations that would provide a direct impact in managing pests and diseases, as well as disaster prevention. APHIS is funding 383 projects in 49 states, as well as Guam and Puerto Rico. The projects approved for allocation will help states and other partners continue providing and strengthening protections against agricultural threats and could also allow the reallocation of resources to other critical programs.

View a list of [selected projects and the FY 2014 funding plan](#) [2] (PDF, 185KB)

Funded initiatives include:

- \$2 million for protection against exotic fruit flies in California;
- \$270,907 to survey and analyze adult honey bee samples collected from apiaries across multiple U.S. states and Puerto Rico for pests and diseases, such as the Varroa virus;
- \$290,000 to the Nez Perce Tribe Bio-control Project involving noxious/invasive weed survey and control activities;
- \$224,894 for the National Plant Board to develop a harmonized national systems approach to nursery certification that enhances existing state programs to reduce the risk of plant pests in nursery stock;
- \$227,808 to North Carolina for enhancing exotic plant pest management by creating New Pest Response Guidelines with university collaboration; and
- \$2.4 million for supporting response to the recently detected coconut rhinoceros beetle infestation in Hawaii.

Prospective projects were evaluated by teams comprised of USDA experts and

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industry representatives and were selected based on criteria that supported six goals -- enhancing plant pest/disease analysis and survey; targeting domestic inspection activities at vulnerable points in the safeguarding continuum; enhancing and strengthening pest identification and technology; safeguarding nursery production; enhancing mitigation capabilities; and conducting outreach and education about these issues. The teams also evaluated submissions based on expected impacts of the project, the technical approach, and how submissions would complement ongoing USDA programs and other previously funded projects funded under the 2008 Farm Bill (Section 10201).

The 2008 Farm Bill has provided funding for more than 1500 projects over the last five years and has played a significant role in protecting American agriculture and educating the public about the threat of invasive species.

The public can help protect America's agricultural and natural resources by being aware of invasive pests and the damage they cause. APHIS created the Hungry Pests public outreach program to empower Americans with the knowledge they need to leave these "hungry pests" behind. Visit www.Hungrypests.com [3]  during April, which APHIS has proclaimed Invasive Plant Pest and Disease Awareness Month, to learn more about invasive plant pest and diseases impacting your area and how you can help. And, join the discussion about invasive plant pests via the HungryPests Facebook page.

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[2]

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/2014/04/pdf/fy14_farm_bill_spending_plan.pdf

[3] <http://www.Hungrypests.com>