

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2006-0007]

Exotic Fruit Fly Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2006-2010

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared a final Exotic Fruit Fly Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2006 through 2010 and is making it available for review. The final strategic plan has been updated in response to the comments we received on the draft strategic plan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Michael B. Stefan, Director, Fruit Fly Exclusion and Detection Programs, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 137, Riverdale, MD 20737-1229; (301) 734-4387.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) responds to exotic fruit fly risks with an integrated system that incorporates surveillance activities, fruit fly control programs, and regulatory actions. To outline how APHIS, along with its domestic and global partners, will harmonize these exotic fruit fly safeguarding programs and activities over the next 5 years, we prepared a draft document entitled "Exotic Fruit Fly Strategic Plan FY 2006-2010." This draft strategic plan focused on the activities funded through APHIS's Fruit Fly Exclusion and Detection programs, whose primary mission is to protect the health and value of American agriculture resources threatened by the establishment of exotic fruit fly pests.

On February 17, 2006, we published in the **Federal Register** (71 FR 8563, Docket No. APHIS-2006-0007) a notice¹ advising the public we had prepared the draft strategic plan and made it available to the public for review and comment.

We solicited comments concerning the draft strategic plan for 30 days ending March 20, 2006. We received

eight comments by that date, from producers, private citizens, a not-for-profit organization, and representatives of State governments. All of the commenters supported the implementation of the 5-year exotic fruit fly strategic plan; however, some of the commenters also expressed concerns regarding the information provided, and the questions posed, in the appendices to the draft plan. The issues raised by the commenters are discussed below.

In Appendix A we offered up for discussion the potential actions we could take in response to the closing of the sterile Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) production facility in Waimanalo, HI. The following options were presented: (1) Do not replace the facility; (2) build a new production facility in Hawaii; (3) partner with California Department of Food and Agriculture to expand their sterile fruit fly production facility in Hawaii; or (4) build a multispecies facility in the continental United States or on foreign soil. The commenters all agreed on the need for a multispecies exotic fruit fly facility to provide backup capacity for our sterile fruit fly programs and emergency needs. Additionally, several commenters suggested potential sites for the new facility.

APHIS is in agreement with these commenters regarding the need for a backup multispecies sterile fruit fly production facility. We have begun to explore the available options, including the construction of a multispecies exotic fruit fly facility, either within or outside the continental United States, and the privatization of sterile fly production. We will be seeking additional information and suggestions from the public on this subject and expect to publish a request for information in a future issue of the **Federal Register**.

In Appendix B, we offered up for discussion a question as to whether or not we should continue to support the current Moscamed Program, a cooperative program of the Guatemalan, Mexican, and U.S. Governments to eradicate Medfly in Mexico and suppress Medfly populations in Guatemala. In the past, reliance on uncertain emergency funds has severely impacted the ability of Moscamed managers to plan and implement an effective program. In order to successfully maintain a Medfly barrier in southern Mexico, and, ultimately eradicate the pest from Central America, funding and management issues must be stabilized. Due to a potential loss of emergency funding (\$10 million of Commodity Credit Corporation funds per year), the draft strategic plan suggested four options for altering the

current program: (1) Eradicate Medfly from Guatemala and create a new barrier zone to maintain; (2) shift the barrier zone to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec; (3) pull out of the cooperative agreement with Mexico and use all \$19 million to fight Medfly in Guatemala; or (4) pull out of the cooperative Moscamed Program in Mexico and Guatemala, and establish an emergency fund for preventative measures along the U.S.-Mexico border and for emergency outbreaks in the United States. As a result of these suggestions, a majority of the commenters expressed concern that altering the current Moscamed Program would diminish its effectiveness. Though it was not offered as an option, several commenters requested that we continue with the currently implemented Moscamed Program, unchanged.

APHIS is in agreement with these commenters with regard to continuing the currently implemented Moscamed Program. Because of the potential loss of emergency funding for the program, we have requested an additional \$14 million in appropriated funds for the Moscamed Program in our 2007 Presidential Budget Proposal.

A few commenters requested we clarify the strategic plan by including additional specific information in the scientific support section before the draft's finalization.

In response to these comments, we have updated the scientific support section of the strategic plan by identifying specific detection and population suppression technologies through which APHIS will seek to reduce the number and severity of exotic fruit fly outbreaks within the United States. We have also included additional risk mitigation information regarding the use of molecular diagnostic techniques and tools that identify foreign sources of fruit fly pest introductions, as well as assurance that risk assessment will be a high priority in quality assurance of the fruit fly program.

We are making the final document available to the public for review. You may view the document on the Regulations.gov Web site (see footnote 1 in this notice for instructions for accessing Regulations.gov), or you may request copies from the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Please refer to the title of the document when requesting copies. Finally, the document is available for review in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room

¹ To view the draft strategic plan and the comments we received, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, click on the "Advanced Search" tab, and select "Docket Search." In the Docket ID field, enter APHIS-2006-0007, then click on "Submit." Clicking on the Docket ID link in the search results page will produce a list of all documents in the docket.

hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

Done in Washington, DC, this 18th day of October 2006.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) Inviting Applications for the Implementation of an American Indian Credit Outreach Initiative

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) soliciting applications for competitive cooperative agreement funds for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 to initiate a credit outreach initiative targeted to American Indian farmers, ranchers and youth residing primarily on Indian reservations within the contiguous United States. FSA anticipates the availability of \$1,166,400 in funding. FSA requests proposals from eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, land-grant institutions and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments interested in a competitively-awarded cooperative agreement to create and implement a mechanism that will provide credit outreach and promotion, pre-loan education, one-on-one loan application preparation assistance and other related services as proposed by the successful applicant that are specific to FSA's Agricultural Credit Programs.

The successful applicant must provide evidence that it has the capability to put in place a data tracking system that thoroughly records all credit outreach-specific related activities and has the ability to provide detailed statistical information on an ad hoc basis. This database must also be functional on a real-time basis as well as being available online through the Internet.

This request for proposals is made prior to passage of a final appropriations bill to allow applicants sufficient time to submit proposals, give the Agency maximum time to process applications, and permit continuity of this program. If actual funding differs from that anticipated (\$1,166,400) based on

historical funding levels, then the Agency will publish a separate Notice of Funds Availability.

DATES: Applications should be completed and submitted as soon as possible, and must be received by the Agency no later than November 24, 2006. Late applications will not be accepted and will be returned to the applicant. Applicants must ensure that the service they use to deliver their applications can do so by the deadline. Due to recent security concerns, packages sent to the Agency by mail have been delayed several days or even weeks.

ADDRESSES: Submit proposals and other required materials to Mike Hill, Acting Director, Outreach Staff, Farm Service Agency, USDA, STOP 0511, Suite 508 Portals Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0511.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mike Hill at (202) 690-1299, or at mike.hill@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Objective

This solicitation is issued pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 2204b(b)(4) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to enter into cooperative agreements to improve the coordination and effectiveness of Federal programs affecting rural areas. The principal objective of this cooperative agreement is to initiate a national outreach program that enables American Indian farmers, ranchers, and youth primarily located on Indian reservations in the contiguous United States to understand and have access to the various FSA Agriculture Credit Programs. All proposed approaches must have, within three months upon acceptance of award: (1) A data tracking system that thoroughly records all credit outreach specific activities and has the ability to provide detailed statistical information on an ad hoc basis, that must also be functional on a real-time basis as well as being available online through the Internet, and (2) the applicant must demonstrate its ability to learn to deliver these credit outreach services utilizing the FSA online Farm Business Plan software program.

Proposals should demonstrate innovative and unique ways of ensuring that American Indians: (1) Will be provided a targeted promotional campaign about, (2) have ready access to, (3) are educated about and (4) can obtain one-on-one assistance specific to the various FSA Agricultural Credit Programs. Applicants must also demonstrate and provide evidence of their ability to record and track

program-specific data which can be accessed on a real-time basis and be available online through the Internet.

Background

Today, American Indians own and control approximately 56 million acres of agricultural lands held in trust by the United States Government and administered, for the most part, by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) of the Department of the Interior. Land-based agricultural enterprises are considered the primary source of revenue for most tribes, due in large part to their severe isolation from any urban type industrial development activities. Thus, protecting this resource is an important function of the elected tribal officials charged with operating business activities that take place within reservations.

In the late 1800's the United States Government recognized the significant needs of agriculture, the agricultural community, and the impacts they had on the American economy and the world as a whole. With this in mind, the government created the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to insure a safe, reliable, and cheap supply of food for this country and ultimately the world. The USDA provides farmers and ranchers technical, financial, and educational resources.

Until 1987, American Indian agricultural producers on reservations had been less able to benefit from USDA services. Since 1987, changes, such as Farm Bills with Indian-specific language, have begun to close some of the gaps in American Indians' lack of access to USDA's programs and services. As positive as these changes were, they did not fully address an implementation plan or the funds to implement sorely needed agribusiness education and direct services to American Indian Reservation farmers and ranchers as a group.

On May 13, 2002, President Bush signed into law the "Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002" (2002-Farm Bill). Again, American Indian Reservation farmers and ranchers are faced with the challenge of understanding and accessing the programs and services afforded through this new law. With this in mind, American Indian agribusinesses, as well as individual Indians, have consistently reported that the primary need in Indian agriculture was access to the capital required to own and operate their own farm or ranch. Therefore, FSA has undertaken this initiative to create and implement a mechanism that will provide credit outreach and other related services related to FSA's Agricultural Credit Programs as a way to