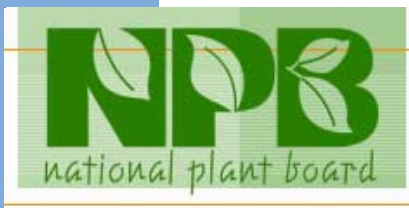


## National Updates

### USDA and NPDN Lab Accreditation Update: Meeting of the Eastern Plant Board, April 4, 2006



National Plant Protection Laboratory Accreditation Program (NPPLAP) Presentations of Phil Berger and Laurene

Levy, APHIS-PPQ-CPHST Summary Notes, Nancy Gregory, Renee DeVries, and Pat Shiel, 5/8/2006

The National Plant Protection Laboratory Accreditation Program (NPPLAP), is being developed for the accreditation and standardization of plant diagnostic labs involved in analysis and diagnosis of regulatory samples. The focus of the program is molecular diagnostics of new and emerging pests of national concern. The goal is to ensure that high quality tests are performed consistently by accredited laboratories using validated methods. This should increase the capacity for testing throughout the country and result in timely and accurate responses to new pests. The program will be voluntary.

Once the program becomes functional, a diagnostic lab wishing to participate in the process would make a formal request

and forward an application along with relevant documentation. The initial application will be followed by inspections, workshops and/or training, as well as testing by completion of a proficiency test panel of samples, depending on the requirements of the specific program. After initial accreditation, certifications for each diagnostic process can be applied for as needed. Maintenance of accreditation will be administered by an Accreditation Manager to insure that each lab maintains minimum required standards by scheduling on-site audits and periodic proficiency testing. Quality control procedures within each method must be adhered to by accredited laboratories to ensure that routinely generated analytical data are scientifically accurate,

*Continued on page 2.....*

#### **Issue Highlights:**

- ◆ Update on USDA-NPDN Lab Accreditation
- ◆ IT Updates from the PDIS Development Team
- ◆ NPDN Diagnostician SOD PCR Training April 2006
- ◆ NPDN Education and Training Website Changes
- ◆ Regional News from the NCPDN, NEPDN, SPDN and WPDN



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valid, defensible, and have known and acceptable precision when regulatory samples are processed.

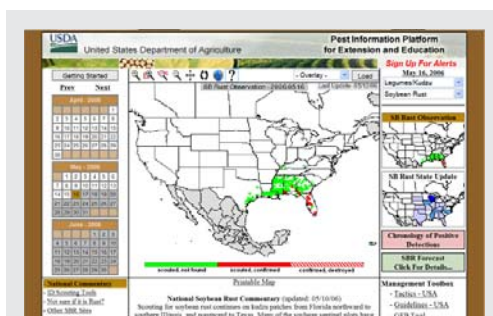
The program is not designed to engage commercial labs. NPPLAP is specifically for diagnostic detection of exotic or regulated pests that threaten US agriculture, and therefore has objectives different from the National Seed Health System (NSHS), even though that model was evaluated in initial planning. There will be national administration through USDA-APHIS-PPQ, as well as a Steering Committee made up of USDA, university, and other representatives of vital stakeholder groups. In addition, individual technical working groups will be convened in new pest situations and will be represented by Federal and State regulatory personnel, as well as scientific experts from the NPDN, APS and others. Development of the program will take approximately twelve to eighteen months.

Currently there is a provisional program in place which allows laboratories to follow this model and obtain provisional approval to process suspect *Phytophthora ramorum* samples using conventional and real-time PCR. All samples producing positive results (now referred to as PAS, Potentially

Actionable Samples) still need to be confirmed at the National level in the CPHST-Beltsville laboratory. The laboratories currently involved in this project have minimized the number of negative samples being funneled to the National confirmatory laboratory.

## USDA Launches New PIPE Website

The USDA public soybean rust website has undergone some changes including a new name change. It is now called the USDA Public PIPE Mapping Website. PIPE stands for Pest Information Platform for Extension and Education. Although the site will continue to provide information on



The new USDA Public PIPE Mapping Website. [www.sbrusa.net](http://www.sbrusa.net)

soybean rust tracking efforts, it has been expanded to also provide information on soybean aphid scouting across the U.S. Maps of either soybean rust or soybean aphid scouting data can be viewed by simply making a selection from a drop down menu.

Other new additions to the website include:

- **State Zoom Tool:** Now it is easier to zoom in on a particular state. In the past users had to highlight a state with on the U.S. map in order to read a particular state's commentary. The new "State Zoom Tool" allows users to choose a state from a drop down menu and immediately view that state's commentary.

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- **State Commentary**  
**Chronology:** If you need a particular state's commentary for specific dates or a range of dates, this tool is very useful. By clicking on the "Commentary Chron" link in the Management Toolbox, a user can pick a state or states and a single date or a range of dates and get all of the commentary for their particular query. The commentary page also offers a print option making it easier to print the information for your records.
- **Good Farming Practice Tool:** This tool provides growers with an interactive report that can be used to document both the state recommendations and the control measures that they have employed in a particular field against rust or aphids. Since this is a web based form, the information that is entered by the grower is saved in an online database.
- **"Insurance Docs":** This link provides growers with 11 different documents important for substantiating and preparing claims.

The USDA Public PIPE Mapping Website can be found on the web at: [www.sbrusa.net](http://www.sbrusa.net).

## Annual Meeting Planning Team Update

Karen Snover-Clift,  
Department of Plant Pathology,  
Cornell University

The planning team continues to work on the organizing the first NPDN National meeting. The members are concentrating on the agenda and the registration process. Our highest priority right now is to nail down the meeting date. We are still looking at the end of January or early February of 2007. Our goal is to make a decision on the date and select the site of the meeting by the next conference call which is scheduled for June 8, 2006.

### NPDN Publications of Interest

[Early Detection of Asian Soybean Rust Using PCR](#). Plant Health Progress, May 2006.

Don't be afraid...but be Aware. PGP Magazine, May 2006.

## 2006 National Soybean Rust Symposium

Registration for the 2006 National Soybean Rust Symposium is now open. This year's event will be held in St. Louis, MO, November 29-December 1. Click [here](#) for more information.

# National Updates

# Diagnostic Updates

## Diagnostic Subcommittee Update

Karen Snover-Clift,  
Department of Plant Pathology,  
Cornell University

The Diagnostics Subcommittee held a conference call on May 11, 2006. During this meeting a number of issues were address. Please refer to the [NPDN website diagnostic subcommittee page](#) (login required), for complete minutes of this meeting.

Action and discussion items from this call included:

- Adding an area in the SOPs that describes the changes made within each version of the document.
- Changing the Soybean Rust SOP to suggest opening suspect samples and sentinel plot samples in a Biosafety Cabinet and then moving a sub-sample, such as leaves in a Petri dish, to a moist chamber and/or microscope area.
- Updating the Citrus Greening SOP to include the now available real-time protocol.
- Updating the *Ralstonia solanacearum* R3B2 SOP to include primers for the real-time PCR protocol.
- The Host Code of “Spore Trap” has been added to the National Repository Database for use when reporting Soybean Rust related diagnoses. This was

needed to distinguish between samples submitted from spore traps and those submitted from actual plant material.

## NPDN PCR Training for Sudden Oak Death and Citrus Greening, April 2006

Karen Snover-Clift,  
Department of Plant Pathology,  
Cornell University

The Diagnostics Subcommittee recently coordinated a NPDN PCR Training at the USDA/APHIS/PPQ/CPHST laboratory in Beltsville, MD. The session was held April 23-26, 2006. Participants came from all regions and included, Karen Snover-Clift (NEPDN), Jan Byrne (NCPDN), Joy Pierzynski and Tamla Blunt (GPDN), Anne Vitoreli and Richard Cullin (SPDN), and Ron Ykema and Samantha Thomas (WPDN).



Participants of the April 2006 NPDN PCR Training held in Beltsville, MD.

During the first day of the session, Kurt Zeller introduced the new real-time PCR protocol for *Phytophthora ramorum*. The participants performed DNA extractions and processed the samples using the real-time protocol.

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Workshop participants look on as Wenbin Li demonstrates PCR protocols for citrus greening.

Day two and three covered a comprehensive review of the pathogens that cause Citrus Greening (aka Huanglongling, which translates to Yellow Dragon Disease). Currently we know of three pathogens capable causing Citrus Greening, *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*, *L. africanus*, and *L. americana*. Wenbin Li provided numerous resources and a Powerpoint presentation that covered the organisms responsible, their life cycles, host plants, PCR protocols and references. We also conducted conventional and real-time PCR protocols and analyzed the results. The workshop was so popular that Laurene Levy and her staff agreed to conduct a second session to be held May 23-25, 2006. This session will focus on real-time and conventional PCR for *Phytophthora ramorum*. Nine members will attend the real-time PCR session with five members staying or coming in solely for the conventional training.

Even with two sessions available, we have a long waiting list of members seeking to receive this training.

We are beginning to plan the Fall session, hopefully scheduling something for early September 2006.

## Diagnostic Updates

### Are you in compliance?

Karen Snover-Clift,  
Department of Plant Pathology,  
Cornell University

Recently laboratory inspections have shown that some NPDN sites may not have a Biological Safety Cabinet (that uses a HEPA filter) in their laboratories. If you process out of State samples, a Biological Safety Cabinet **is** required. A number of States received permits that stated they would only process samples from contiguous States. In this case, a Biological Safety Cabinet **is not** required. The NPDN goal is to upgrade all our laboratories to include Biological Safety Cabinets.

Please check your permit. Number 4 under "Permit Conditions" then "Additional Conditions", should state whether or not you are required to use a Biological Safety Cabinet in your laboratory. The wording may appear as, "All samples received that originate from States outside those contiguous to your State and all samples suspected of containing select agents (see [www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/permits/agr\\_bioterrorism](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/permits/agr_bioterrorism)), quarantine pests (see [www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/regpestlist](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/regpestlist)) or other pests of concern must be initially opened and examined within a certified biological safety cabinet (Class II, Type A or equivalent).

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Following initial processing, samples in culture dishes, in microscopic mounts or in equivalently secure containers may be removed from the safety cabinet for subsequent diagnostic determinations. For large samples, bags may be carefully opened outside the biological safety cabinet to obtain smaller samples for subsequent processing in the biological safety cabinet.”

You should contact Jim White at APHIS if you have any questions about biosafety Cabinets and your permit conditions: [James.L.White2@usda.gov](mailto:James.L.White2@usda.gov) or 607-734-8713.

## IT Updates

### From the PDIS Development Team

#### PDIS Commendation Awards

Jayasri Krishnasamy  
PDIS Development Team  
Kansas State University

PDIS presented awards to Nagarjuna Nagulapati (Nag), PDIS software Developer and Nancy Taylor, Extension Pathologist, The Ohio State University.



Nag was awarded the “2005 Bug Smasher of the year” award for his contribution to resolve the PDIS software problems. He was recognized for his leadership in coordinating the

PDIS team to resolve the bugs in timely manner.

Nancy Taylor was awarded the “2005 Most Valuable User” award for her comments, thoughtful suggestions, and change requests in making PDIS a better system.



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## Education and Training

### NPDN Education and Training Website Undergoing Major Changes

Amanda Hodges  
Univeristy of Florida/  
IFAS, Entomology and  
Nematology Department

The NPDN Training & Education site is undergoing major changes in the next couple of months. We are in the process of transitioning the

old learning material into a new learning management based system. Our new website is under construction but will be available to you in the next month. We will have several new features that will promote advertisement of upcoming training sessions. You will still be able to link to training materials through the SPDN website. Please direct further questions to Amanda Hodges at [achodges@ufl.edu](mailto:achodges@ufl.edu).



Continued from page 6.....

PDIS team thanks her for her insight, wisdom, and creativity and especially for her time and effort to ensure PDIS meets the needs of the diagnosticians.

### ◆ **New PDIS Feature** ◆

Nagarjuna Nagulapati  
PDIS Development Team  
Kansas State University

#### **Batch Unlock Feature**

In an effort to streamline User Account Management, we have added a new feature to batch unlock users. Using this feature, Regional and Institutional IT support personnel now have the capability of unlocking any or all of the locked users in a batch.



### **Did ya know?**

Judy Dizon  
PDIS Development Team  
Kansas State University

- Email notifications are automatically sent to Advisory Consultants for collaborative diagnostics once a diagnostician completes a sample.
- A user who has an Institution IT or higher security role can manage email notifications being sent to diagnosticians.

Please refer to the User Manual found at the login page of [www.pdis.org](http://www.pdis.org) and see “Referrals and Transfers” and “Editing Labs/Diagnostic Lab Administration” sections for more information.

### **Accomplished Requests**

Nagarjuna Nagulapati  
PDIS Development Team  
Kansas State University

- **Search Feature on Homepage**  
PDIS users who are diagnosticians can now search for samples from the PDIS home page.
- **Back Date Samples**  
Diagnosticians can check-in samples with back date and also can edit sample number and sample received date for these samples without interfering current samples.
- **“Small Fruit” and “Citrus” choices Added to Sample Category** list box on *General* tab for diagnosticians.
- **Backup Health Monitoring Feature**  
Backup Health Monitoring feature is now available for all PDIS users.  
To view logs, expand the “System Status” menu (System Status menu is located at the very bottom at the left side of the screen) and click on the “Backup Audit Logs” link.

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# IT Updates

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#### •Contact Directory

Users can save contact information into a contact directory using a business phone number or a home phone number.

### Acquiring an Image from a Microscope in PDIS

Sharmila Dabad  
PDIS Development Team  
Kansas State University



Photo Mary McKellar

Have a microscopic image that you would like to link to your sample record in PDIS? Below are the directions for acquiring an image from a microscope in PDIS.

1. Log in to PDIS system with your username and password
2. Select the respective queue from left side of a screen
3. Open the sample by clicking on sample number
4. Go to the 'Images' tab
5. Click on button 'Acquire Image from Microscope'
6. It will open a list of microscopes which are configured to acquire an image
7. Select the required one by clicking on 'select'

For more information, please click on the 'Help' link under the Main Menu on [www.pdis.org](http://www.pdis.org).

## National Database

### National Database Subcommittee Update

Karen L. Snover-Clift,  
Subcommittee Chair  
Department of Plant  
Pathology, Cornell  
University

The National Database Subcommittee met on May 10, 2006 to continue our work on reviewing the massive EPA Pest and Host lists and creating guidelines for uploading documents that will clarify how sample diagnoses should be transmitted to the National Repository at Purdue University. During this meeting a number of issues were addressed. Please refer to [the NPDN website National Database subcommittee page](#) (login required), for complete minutes of this meeting.

Discussion items during the National Database conference call included:

- The changes to the abiotic listing were reviewed to allow input from all regions as some regions were not represented at the last meeting. The report will be circulated to the epidemiology and IT committees for comments.
- Our goal is to minimize the number of entries that are very similar. We propose to make larger changes, as in formatting styles, in collaboration with other committees and to do this as a Phase 2 event.

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- Members were asked to continue reviewing the guidelines for uploading samples and members using database tools other than PDIS were asked to ensure the guidelines will work for them.
- New level of confidence definitions were included in the notes for committee members to consider and to suggest changes during the next meeting.
- Members reviewed the nematode listing and made a few suggestions for obvious changes such as missing information in fields.
- Virginia Russell will consult with a nematologist about some style and basic formatting questions and report back to the group at the next meeting.
- The next meeting will be held on June 14, 2006.

### **Review and Outcomes of NPDN Diagnostician/IT Meeting**

Eileen Luke  
Director, NAPIS  
Purdue University

The second joint meeting with the Diagnostics and Information Technology Committees was held at Purdue University on January 10 – 11, 2006.

The 4 key points of the meeting were –

- **1. NPDN National Database Committee**
- **2. Draft of Policy of Uploading Data to NPDN National Database to be reviewed by Operations Committee**
- **3. New Levels of Confidence to be Reported – Confirmed, Not**

### **Detected, Suspected, and Inconclusive**

- **4. New Field to be Added to National Database – Method Used – PCR, Serological, Microscopic, Cultural, Visual Observation, Inclusion Body, Bioassay, Biochemical, and Image**

### **1. The NPDN National Database**

**Committee** was set up to review and combine terminology for the Master lists and to give guidance as to content examples to achieve data consistency in the national database. The Committee members are –

1. Karen Snover-Clift NEPDN, head of Diagnostic committee
2. Virginia Russell, CERIS-national database representative
3. Nancy Gregory, NEPDN
4. Kim Maxson-Stein, GPDN, S. Dakota
5. Karen Rane, Purdue-IN, NCPDN
6. Carla Thomas, WPDN, California
7. Tim Tidwell, CA-CDFR, WPDN
8. Ann Vitoreli, FL, SPDN
9. Mark Mayfield, KS GPDN plant identification
10. Will Lanier, Montana State, GPDN entomologist

IT personnel will be invited to participate as needed.

- 2. A draft document on Policy of Uploading Data to NPDN National Database** was created by a sub-group in attendance at the meeting. Those participating in the sub-group were –

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# National Database



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The exercise consists of a simulated plant sample that is submitted to the state LGU diagnostic lab, and follows the sample and the communication contacts through all stages of diagnostic procedures, including final diagnostic ID at a federal APHIS lab. The results of the diagnosis are also tracked back through the regulatory pathway until the submitter of the sample is notified. The goal is to establish swift lines of communication so no time will be lost in the event if a real biosecurity emergency. At the end of the exercise, the participants evaluate their procedure to be certain that the following objectives have been met:

- Information flows through the appropriate nodes of pathway.
- All essential participants are informed of sample status at the appropriate time.
- Feed back loops are complete at each step.
- Decision makers and regulators are informed immediately upon confirmation of diagnosis.
- Diagnostic time line is as rapid as possible.
- Information flow time line is as rapid as possible.
- Regional, state and NAPIS data entry is performed in a timely manner.

To date the NPDN has coordinated and executed 38 pest of concern exercises in 43 states and Puerto Rico.



### **Northeast Region:**

Mary McKellar  
NEPDN Education and  
Training Coordinator,  
Cornell University

### **Pine Shoot Beetle Quarantine in MA, CT and RI**

The recent discovery of the pine shoot beetle, *Tomicus piniperda*, in Berkshire County, Massachusetts has led to the quarantine of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island to prevent the spread of this pest to other non-quarantine areas of the U.S.

For more information about the pine shoot beetle and the most recent quarantine of this pest please visit on the web:

[NAPPO Phytosanitary Alert System: Quarantine of the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island for Pine Shoot Beetle \(\*Tomicus piniperda\*\)](#)

[APHIS-PPQ Pine Shoot Beetle Fact Sheet](#)

[MA Introduced Pest Outreach Program Pest Alert on Pine Shoot Beetle](#)

### **Boxwood Rust Detected in PA**

The detection of boxwood rust (*Puccinia buxi*) on boxwood in a greenhouse in Pennsylvania was confirmed by the USDA APHIS National Identifier Services on May 5, 2006. Please click [here](#) for more information about this detection.

# Regional Updates



Pine shoot beetle (*Tomicus piniperda*). Photo Indiana Department of Agriculture [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org).

# Regional Updates



## Western Region

Richard Hoenisch  
Department of Plant  
Pathology, UC Davis

## WPDN Homoptera Workshop March 2006

The WPDN organized and hosted a “Homoptera” Workshop from March 21 – 24, 2006, in the entomology teaching lab in Briggs Hall, UC Davis. Along with other departments, Briggs Hall houses the Department of Entomology.

Amanda Hodges, Dick Hoenisch, Carla Thomas, and Gillian Watson of the California Dept of Food and Agriculture, organized the initial workshop announcement as well as all the details associated with bringing so many people together for a successful four day workshop.

The workshop title “Homoptera” was put in quotations because the first presentation included Penny Gullan’s article; “**WHY THE TAXON HOMOPTERA DOES NOT EXIST.**” Subsequent presentations placed the Superfamilies Psylloidea, Aleyrodidae, Aphidoidea, Coccoidea, Cicadomorpha, and Fulgoroidea firmly within the order Hemiptera. These presenters included Charles Bartlett from the University of Delaware, Chris Dietrich from the

Illinois Natural History Survey, John Dooley from USDA-APHIS-PPQ in San Francisco, Greg Evans with PPQ, Demian Kondo from UCD, Dugg Miller and Gary Miller from USDA-ARS, Julia Scher from PPQ, and Ray Gill, Gillian Watson, and Shaun Winterton from the CDFA.

15 of the 30 participants came from APHIS-USDA-PPQ offices in Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Miami. The other 15 entomologists were from Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Nevada, and New Mexico. The four days together made for a good working group. A wonderful group dinner on the Thursday evening at a restaurant in

Davis changed the subject from rather serious entomological categories to much more lighthearted conversations. Friday morning found us all back in the lab and attentive to the intricacies of Cicadomorpha and Fulgoromorpha.

The literature generated by the workshop was quite

substantial. The presenters contributed both published and draft articles, Power Point presentations, and CD’s. A 250 page binder, 11 keys, and 3 CD’s were provided for the presenters and participants.



Presenter Gillian Watson (CDFA) and participant Tom Watanabe (USDA-APHIS-PPQ Honolulu) during the WPDN March 2006 Homoptera Workshop held at UC Davis.

## *National Events*

**July 29-August 2, 2006:** [American Phytopathological Society Annual Meeting](#), Quebec City, Canada

**September 25-29, 2006:** [15th Ornamental Workshop on Diseases and Insects](#), Crossnore/Kanuga, Hendersonville, NC

**October 16-17, 2006:** IT-Diagnosticians Meeting, Kansas City, MO. More information to follow!

**November 29 – December 1:** [National Soybean Rust Symposium](#), St. Louis, Missouri

**December 10-13, 2006:** [Entomological Society of America Annual Meeting](#), Indianapolis, IN

**Tentative date: January 2007,** NPDN National Meeting, Orlando, FL. More information to follow!

# Upcoming Events

