



Impacts of the National Plant Diagnostic Network

Program and Mission

- The NPDN focuses on the early detection, accurate diagnosis, and rapid communications needed to help mitigate the impact of endemic, emerging, and exotic pathogens and pests that attack agricultural, forest, and landscape plants in the U.S.
- The NPDN's mission is accomplished through a coordinated network of diagnostic laboratories and experts at land grant universities, state departments of agriculture, and industry developing and deploying regionally and nationally coordinated programs in diagnostics, training and education, and response.

NPDN Record of Achievement

Prior to the NPDN:

- Information on new pests and diseases was not easily accessible.
- Communications on new outbreaks were poorly coordinated and inadequate.
- Funding and infrastructure supporting plant diagnostics in the country had degraded to a point that many state and university laboratories were understaffed, ill-equipped and, in some cases, threatened with closure.

NPDN Accomplishments

- National Repository established for records of endemic and emerging pests and diseases.
- Secure communications protocols established among NPDN labs and regulatory agencies.
- Diagnostic infrastructure supporting plant diagnostics in the U.S. greatly enhanced for both capability and capacity. Diagnosticians are well trained in modern diagnostics technologies and molecular protocols.
- NPDN labs routinely support national, state, and local response to disease and pest outbreaks, providing surge capacity for over 1,000,000 high consequence samples.
- The NPDN has trained and registered 11,480 First Detectors nationwide.
- NPDN has protected jobs in agriculture by verifying that traded ag products are free of quarantine pests and diseases, thus ensuring that export and domestic markets remain open.
- Agriculture exports support 1 million jobs, 75 % of these exports are plant-based.
- NPDN serves as a model for efficiency, communication and integration across jurisdictions. In 2010, the NPDN was acknowledged with the **USDA NIFA Partnership Award for Innovative Program Models**.

Consequences of the loss of the NPDN:

- Fewer diagnosticians trained, reduced capacity to address disease and pest outbreaks, and closure of plant diagnostic clinics.
- Loss of highly trained staff with specialized expertise.
- Dramatic reduction in state-to-state communications regarding introductions of new and emerging pests and diseases.
- More invasive pests and pathogens will go undetected until it is too late to remediate the problem, with a greater potential for catastrophic losses to the agricultural economy.
- Fewer jobs and less economic stability due to reduced export of plant-based products. Less foreign and domestic investment in U.S. agriculture products due to restrictions on trade from quarantined regions.