VILSACK ANNOUNCES $30M TO FIGHT CITRUS DISEASE
USDA Targets Citrus Greening with Promising Tools and Long Term Solutions

APHIS Newsroom

On February 9, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced $30 million in funding for 22 projects to help citrus producers combat Huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening, a devastating citrus disease that threatens U.S. citrus production. The money will fund promising projects that could offer near-term solutions as well as research funding that may develop long-terms solutions. The promising near-term tools and solutions are funded through the HLB Multiagency Coordination Group while the research projects are funded through the Specialty Crop Research Initiative Citrus Disease Research and Education (CDRE) program, which is made available through the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill).

“Our HLB Multi-Agency Coordination Group has worked closely with the citrus industry to select and fund projects that we think will make a real difference for growers against HLB,” said Vilsack. “Funding these projects through cooperative agreements puts us one step closer to putting real tools to fight this disease into the hands of citrus growers.” Vilsack continued, “Through the CDRE research we are announcing today, we are also investing in long-term solutions to diseases that threaten the long-term survival of the citrus industry.”

USDA’s HLB Multi-Agency Coordination Group funded fifteen projects that support thermotherapy, best management practices, early detection, and pest control efforts for a total of more than $7 million. All of them are designed to provide near-term tools and solutions to help the citrus industry fight HLB. Visit the APHIS Newsroom (www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/newsroom/news) to read the full announcement including descriptions of the funded projects.

In addition to these projects, USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture funded more than $23 million dollars for research and education project to find lasting solutions to citrus greening disease. Examples of funded projects include developing HLB-
resistant citrus cultivars, the development of field detection system for HLB, using heat as a treatment for prolonging productivity in infected citrus trees, creating a new antimicrobial treatment, among others. A fact sheet with a complete list of awardees and project descriptions (PDF, 316KB) is available on the USDA website.

CDRE is a supplement to the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI). The focus of this year’s funding was specifically on citrus greening disease. Because there are wide differences in the occurrence and progression of HLB among the states, there were regional as well as national priorities for CDRE. These priorities, recommended by the Citrus Disease Subcommittee, fall within four categories: 1) priorities that deal with the pathogen; 2) those that deal with the insect vector; 3) those that deal with citrus orchard production systems; and 4) those that deal with non-agricultural citrus tree owners.

The Farm Bill builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past six years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for taxpayers. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.

SAVE THE DATE! March 8–12, 2016

The NPDN will convene in Washington, DC in 2016 for the 4th national meeting themed “Advancing Diagnostics to Meet Plant Health Needs”. Please mark your calendars for March 8–12, 2016, for a meeting at the Doubletree, Crystal City.

ITINERARY:

Tuesday, March 8: Regional meetings for NEPDN, SPDN, WPDN
Wednesday & Thursday, March 9–10: National meeting program
Friday, March 11: Field trips
Saturday, March 12: Workshops

Please watch www.npdn.org for more information in the coming months, including registration and program details.
The Sainsbury Laboratory will be hosting its second summer school in Plant Microbe Interactions. Running from August 17–28, the program covers the following key topics and techniques:

- Pathogenomics
- Effectors & immunity
- Surface immunity
- Resistance proteins
- Cellular defense
- Translations: tipping the balance
- Proteomics
- Bioinformatics & big data
- Synthetic biology
- High throughput microscopy

The TSL Summer School will feature extensive practical training in cutting edge techniques and stimulating discussions on the latest thinking and discoveries in the field, all led by our Group Leaders and exciting invited guest speakers. The course will be ideal for students new to the field and those looking to get an understanding of the breadth and quality of work across the whole of the Plant Microbe Interaction community.

More information can be found at [http://summerschool.tsl.ac.uk](http://summerschool.tsl.ac.uk)
Invasive Snail and Slug Workshop II  
Dick Hoenisch, Department of Plant Pathology, University of California at Davis

Due to ongoing interest in invasive snails and slugs in the United States, the Western Plant Diagnostic Network (WPDN) is sponsoring a second invasive Malacology workshop. Please see the WPDN Winter-Spring 2013 newsletter featuring the first Malacology workshop in March 2013. The three-day workshop will be held on June 16–18, 2015, at the University of California, Davis. The participants should be national, state and county identifiers, those with regulatory responsibilities, agricultural/horticultural inspectors, wholesale nursery producers, and those academically interested in malacology. Please contact Dick Hoenisch whoenisch@ucdavis.edu, phone (530) 754-2255 for registration or information about the workshop.

The presenters are David Robinson (USDA-APHIS-Plant Protection and Quarantine) and Suzete Gomes of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, Patrick Marquez and Gregory Bartman, both with USDA-APHIS-PPQ in Los Angeles, Rory McDonnell, slug expert at UC Riverside, and Edward Caswell-Chen and Christy Sanchez at UC Davis, working on snail vectored plant pathogens. This workshop was requested by many state pest identifiers because snails and slugs do not fit into plant pathology or entomology, but rather are a totally different biological and generally unknown category.

The registration fee will depend on the level of support from extramural grants that have been requested for the workshop. I will keep registrants informed concerning final fee structure.

Many thanks, Richard “Dick” Hoenisch

REGIONAL NEWS

Congratulations Raj!

Dr. Raj Singh, assistant professor and director of the Louisiana State University AgCenter’s Plant Diagnostic Center, received the Floyd S. Edmiston Extension Award from the LSU AgCenter on December 15, 2014 for excellence in planning, implementing and evaluating extension educational programs. This meritorious award is made annually to the extension specialist, who during the past three years has made the most outstanding contributions toward improving extension services and mission while benefitting the people in the state of Louisiana. Singh was recognized for his outstanding extension program that provides accurate and timely diagnoses of plant diseases and other pests and educational programs to the agronomic and horticultural industries and homeowners of Louisiana. In addition, he provides diagnostic services in support of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and serves as a liaison to the National Plant Diagnostic Network.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Meetings

March 23–26, 2015
8th International IPM Symposium
Salt Lake City, UT

August 1–5, 2015
2015 APS Annual Meeting
Pasadena, CA

August 2–6, 2015
National Plant Board 2015 Annual Meeting
Sedona, AZ

November 15–18, 2015
Entomology 2015
Portland, OR

March 8–12, 2016
NPDN 4th National Meeting
Washington DC

PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Symptoms of rose rosette disease
Emaravirus RRD

Mary Ann Hansen, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bugwood.org

CONTRIBUTE

Share Tips and News with Your Colleagues
Recently write an article for a trade journal? Do you have a tip, announcement, regional news or network update you would like to include in the NPDN News? Email Rachel McCarthy at rachel.mccarthy@cornell.edu