

**European Pepper Moth (EPM)  
Interagency Working Group  
Conference Call  
October 26, 2011 (1:00 – 1:45 pm; EDT)**

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**Participants & Self Introductions:**

Carl Schulze (SPRO-NJ) Director Division of Plant Industry  
Tom Denholm (APHIS-PPQ) Pest Survey Specialist NJ-DE  
Catherine Marzolf (APHIS-PPQ) State Operations Support Officer FL  
Tyson Emery (FDACS DPI) Bureau Chief Plant & Apiary Inspection  
Courtney Albrecht (CDFA) Supervisor Pest Exclusion Branch  
Norm Mullaly (APHIS-PPQ) State Operations Support Officer CA  
Lance Osborne (Co-Chair, TWG) University of Florida  
Jim Bethke (Co-Chair, TWG) UC Cooperative Extension  
Lin Schmale, (Chair, ILG) Society of American Florists, Sr Dir Gov't Relations  
Diane Schuble (APHIS-PPQ, EPM Task Force Coordinator)

**Discussion:** After introductions Lin explained the Task Force charge. The Task Force model has been developed by APHIS to help manage pest problems and avoid the problems caused if states implement state-by-state quarantines. Growers are not so willing to collaborate in scouting for, identifying, and managing pest outbreaks if they are afraid of being penalized by state or federal quarantines, so the Task Force approach can help to manage a pest, avert economic damage and pest spread through a more cooperative approach. The goal of the task force is to help industry deal with this pest, which (although not federally regulated) could cause serious damage in a variety of crops. Industry Leadership is made up of representatives from potentially impacted industries, including fruit and vegetables, floriculture, nursery, etc to coordinate the development of the overall goals and objectives, in combating the pest in the most effective and efficient manner. The Technical Working Group is made up of subject matter experts and specialists from universities, extension service, private industry, federal, and state agencies, and NGOs to develop Best Management Practices (BMP) or Pest Management Programs (PMP). The Interagency Working Group is made up of Federal and State regulatory officials from potentially impacted states that agree on regulatory approaches and help to provide operational and logistical support to prevent or minimize the pest's impact on the various industries.

Jim updated the group on his research in S. California where there is a heavy infestation. There is not a lot of literature available. He is the only member of the TWG working with a colony. Jim is currently trying dips, biological control and water trapping. He emphasized the amount of damage he is seeing on poinsettias, but on the positive side, funding has been allocated for his research. Lance expressed gratitude Farm Bill funding was obtained for this project. Lin pointed out that although Jim can maintain a colony in CA, no one in FL been granted permission yet, which slows their ability to make progress. Lance went through the 4 subgroups in the TWG. Much of the work of these subgroups is on hold until permissions are granted to start a colony.

-Management/Control, which Jim leads, is evaluating chemicals and biological control.

-The Biology and Ecology/ Life History subgroup is performing biological studies such as EPM's biology in CA vs FL and life cycles we may expect in the warmer US climates as opposed to what literature records in the northern European climates.

-The Education subgroup already has some excellent material available. Both Jim Bethke and Stephanie Stocks (Southern Plant Diagnostic Network) have been very active. See Lance's website:

<http://mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/Iso/DUPON/default.asp>. The TWG chairs ask the IAWG members for guidance. What other support can the TWG provide?

- The Survey and Diagnostics group will coordinate surveys, results, and diagnostic tools.

Jim reiterated that the goal is to provide a single BMP document. Lin said that industry needs to be educated in best practices as soon as possible so as to reduce any State fears that may lead to quarantines or unnecessary economic harm.

The regulators were each given the opportunity to respond with questions and or comments. Carl indicated that he hasn't heard of any States raising concerns other than the application of clean stock certifications, with which NJ is on board. NJ is welcoming a BMP document so industry will be prepared. Courtney explained to Lance the meaning of CDFR's "C" rating of EPM and that the expectation is material will be "generally free for shipping." She also noted that the County Ag Commissioners are individually responsible for deciding what would constitute an unreasonable level of pests in a shipment. Tyson said that no one has requested any certifications from FL on EPM as of yet. FL does expect "clean stock." EPM is still considered a "quarantinable" pest in FL nurseries and there is a zero tolerance policy for out-of-state shipments. Lance asked about any survey being conducted and DPI's stance on EPM in the nursery environs. It is no longer being surveyed. Florida conducts nursery inspections for EPM. Lin pointed out the differing standards between FL and CA – FL will hold and treat out-of-state shipments with EPM. Lance noted that the surveys to date found only adults and that trapping is done by pheromone traps, which will not find this pest in instar stages because those are located on the ground. Lin commented that more survey work may be needed.

Lance asked Jim if there are any effective treatments to eradicate an infestation in a greenhouse. Repeated applications of the chemical Orthene are effective. The organisms die but the webbing remains, which could mislead people into thinking the pest is still present. That note should be included in the educational material. The poinsettia industry should also be aware that Orthene can burn bracts, making the plant unsellable so use with caution. Lin asked what industry can do to help at this point. Tyson said Extension offices can assist and DPI staff can share information when performing site visits. Lance asked if it could be helpful for the TWG to design a leaflet. Tyson said yes, and that DPI can post it on their website in addition to sending mass emails to their industry contacts. Lin asked, can we work to get FL not to require zero tolerance? Tyson will work with his group and get back to Lin on that. Lin also asked if EPM was a CAPS survey target. (Diane later verified that EPM is not a CAPS pest this year.)

Jim said the infestation initially detected in California is actually old – the pest has been here for a while, and has just now built up to levels where it is causing problems. As other states find they too have populations, it may be seen that they are also old. That means we are ahead of the game in that we are now aware EPM is here in the US and can deal with it. Jim predicts that EPM will have a hard impact on strawberries. Lance pointed out we need more research on EPM's host range. Lin asked if this all falls to Jim, since he is the only one to have permission to have a colony. However, the TWG will be able to share the work. Members have varied specialties and are in varied locales.

**Next steps:** The Industry Leadership group will have a conference call, followed by another TWG call. Diane asked for volunteers from the IAWG members to chair that subgroup, noting that the responsibilities are light -- Be liaison between the group and EPM Task Force Coordinator (Diane) for setting up calls and represent the IAWG on TWG and IL calls. Thank you in advance for your interest and assistance.