

Chilli Thrips
Inter-Agency Working Group
Conference Call #4
April 18, 2008 (1400-1445, ET)

Participants:

Ken Glenn (APHIS-PPQ State Plant Health Director-SC)
Tad Hardy (LA-State Plant Regulatory Official)
Mike Wallace (AZ- for John Caravetta, State Plant Regulatory Official)
Kathy Cameron (AZ-Quarantine Program Specialist)
Jerry Levitt (APHIS-PPQ State Plant Health Director-AZ)
Gray Haun (TN-State Plant Regulatory Official; National Plant Board)
Tim McNary (PPQ-WR; Senior Regional Program Manager)
Barb Maehler (APHIS-PPQ State Plant Health Director-CA)
Paul Hornby (APHIS-PPQ State Plant Health Director-FL)
Harry Fulton (MS-State Plant Regulatory Official)
Dusty Grant (for Stuart Kuehn, APHIS-PPQ State Plant Health Director-TX)
Eduardo Varona (APHIS-PPQ, Chair, Inter-Agency Working Group)
Lin Schmale (Chair; Industry Working group)
Scott Ludwig (acting Co-Chair; Technical Working Group)
Alan Dowdy (APHIS-PPQ)
Bill Grefenstette (APHIS-PPQ)
Diane Schuble (APHIS-PPQ Chilli Thrips Task Force Coordinator)

Important Discussions:

- Bill G. introduced Diane Schuble as USDA's new Task Force Coordinator, and Eduardo Varona, Florida State Operations Support Officer, as the new Chairman of the Inter-Agency Working Group (I-AWG).
- Scott L., acting Chair of the Technical Working Group, addressed the concerns generated by the I-AWG's responses to Chilli Thrips detections. He pointed out the disparate approaches taken between residential property detections and retail/commercial finds, which are confusing. Currently, commercial facilities are treated in the harshest manner, which will discourage cooperation from that group, due to the negative economic impact that follows detection. Consequently, they may begin treating on their own without technical guidance, which could lead to more serious resistance issues with Western Flower Thrips.
- Scott L. reminded the group that when we were dealing with the Q biotype whitefly, commercial facilities were permitted to submit anonymous samples. He suggested that the "Stop Sale" orders, "trace forwards" and "trace backs" currently in place for retail and commercial establishments be relaxed. He suggested reporting new finds only to the State and County levels.
- The group discussed the approach of handling Chilli Thrips as a quality pest. Several States expressed that preference.
- The regulators weighed this information and reached a consensus to modify their policy for dealing with new detections. Barb M. raised legitimate concerns for California and said she would discuss this with State regulatory officials. She was told by Alan D. that an Official Control program would be an option for California, and maybe others, beginning later this year.

The revised responses to Chilli Thrips detections are as follows:

1. **Residential Properties:** new detections will be tentatively identified by regional qualified identifiers (Cindy McKenzie, J.B. Edwards, Jack Reed, or Gillian Watson); initial detections in each State will be forwarded through the SEL process for confirmation, and reported back to the State level. Because plant material on residential properties usually does not pose a significant risk of spread—cut roses used in flower arrangements being a possible exception—new detections from residential properties will be reported only at the State level. The TWG will provide affected homeowners with information on effective treatment methods.
2. **Retail Stores:** new detections will be tentatively identified by regional qualified identifiers (Cindy McKenzie, J.B. Edwards, Jack Reed, or Gillian Watson); initial detections in each State will be forwarded through the SEL process for confirmation, and reported back to the State and County levels. Detections in retail stores will be reported by State and County with the understanding that a “clean” post-treatment inspection concludes the matter. The TWG will provide information on effective treatment methods.
3. **Commercial Facilities:** new detections will be tentatively identified by regional qualified identifiers (Cindy McKenzie, J.B. Edwards, Jack Reed, or Gillian Watson); initial detections in each State will be forwarded through the SEL process for confirmation, and reported back to the State and County levels. Detections in commercial facilities will be reported by State and County with the understanding that a “clean” post-treatment inspection concludes the matter. The TWG will provide information on effective treatment methods.

It was noted that heavy infestations in retail/commercial establishments would require the more stringent regulatory approach.

Next Steps:

1. Diane S. will distribute notes from this call to the I-AWG; final copies will go to the IWG and TWG.
2. Eduardo V. will convene the next I-AWG conference call at 1300 hrs ET on May 16, 2008.