

**Chilli Thrips  
Technical Working Group  
Conference Call  
March 28, 2008 (2:15 – 3:30 pm; ET)**

---

**Participants:** Lance Osborne (Co-Chair, TWG)  
Matthew Ciomperlik (Co-Chair, TWG)  
Cindy McKenzie (USDA-ARS)  
Bob Shatters (USDA-ARS)  
Cristi Palmer (NJ – IR-4 Ornamental Horticulture Program Manager)  
Carol Sutherland (NM – Extension Entomologist)  
Mike Wallace (I-AWG; AZ – State Plant Regulatory Official)  
Ann Wildman (I-AWG; FL – Asst. State Plant Health Director)  
Catherine Preston (APHIS-PPQ; FL – State Operations Support Officer)  
Amanda Hodges (FL – SPDN Assistant Director)  
Kevin Hoffman (I-AWG; CA – State Plant Regulatory Official)  
Barb Maehler (I-AWG; CA – Asst. State Plant Health Director)  
Lynn Garrett (Economist)  
Joe Funderburk (FL – Extension Specialist)  
Bill Kauffman (I-AWG; GA – State Plant Health Director)  
Lin Schmale (Chair, IWG)  
Jack Reed (MS – Research Professor)  
Barry Smith (I-AWG; GA – State Plant Regulatory Official)  
Barry Troutman (IWG; Valley Crest Landscaping Materials)  
Scott Ludwig (TX – Extension Program Specialist)  
Bill Grefenstette (APHIS – PPQ)  
Diane Schuble (APHIS –PPQ; Chilli Thrips Task Force Coordinator)

**Updates:**

- Scott L. reviewed the four parts to the charge by the I-AWG to the TWG.
- Bill G. summarized the last I-AWG conference call. Diane Schuble was introduced as APHIS-PPQ's new Coordinator for the Chilli Thrips Task Force.

**Important Discussions:**

**Detection in FL**

Strawberries – Lance O. reported that Chilli Thrips were detected in 2 fields of strawberries in Florida; both fields are near residential areas; this is the only confirmed occurrence on strawberries field grown produce.

Blueberries – Lance O. has received a few reports of some unusual thrips damage on blueberries; he confirmed that Chilli Thrips were present and that they could reproduce on the blueberries. An earlier report of a Chilli Thrips detection in a commercial pepper field has proven false.

[ TWG = Technical Working Group; IWG = Industry Working Group; I-AWG = Inter-Agency Working Group ]

**Detection in TX** – Matt C. reported that Chilli Thrips has been detected on roses in Harris County; it was difficult to determine if the roses were planted recently or had overwintered; very few homeowner samples are being submitted; Chilli Thrips have been found in some retail stores in South Texas and in northeast Texas; they have been seen on roses, but are not believed to have originated on them; the original host is unknown.

**Detection in GA** – Barry S. reported that Chilli Thrips had been detected on Hawthorn at 3 locations in 2 counties; this has not been confirmed by PPQ, and Bill K. plans to work with the GA Department of Agriculture to confirm the identification; the areas have been cleaned-up.

**Testing in States** – Matt C. asked what testing is being done in other states; California is not testing specifically; Mississippi is making plans to sample nurseries.

**Certified Identification of Chilli Thrips Detections** – Diane S. and Bill G. will report on the procedure for obtaining certified identification of Chilli Thrips detections. (NOTE: the National Identification System (NIS) protocol requires any official confirmation to be made through the Systematic Entomology Lab (SEL) administered by USDA-ARS; normally, subsequent identifications are made by Port and Domestic identifiers, but agreements can be made on a case by case basis to give authority to State identifiers.)

The group discussed how identifiers could become qualified, and suggested that a protocol would be helpful; the use of voucher samples was suggested; Amanda H. suggested designating one certified identifier in the West and one in the East; the group asked if Chilli Thrips is a regulated pest. (NOTE: Chilli Thrips *is* listed as “an actionable pest” at U.S. ports of entry. Currently, there are no federal domestic regulations against this pest, although some States may be drafting their own regulations.) Others asked if identifiers G.B. Edwards (FL) and Jillian Watson (CA) are PPQ-certified for Chilli Thrips identification.

**CAPS Survey** – Diane S. was asked if Chilli Thrips was on the CAPS list for 2008, and if so, where does it rank? (NOTE: Chilli Thrips *is* on the list, ranked 13<sup>th</sup>, under two plans; in the National Survey, it is included under Citrus Commodity Survey; a State electing that survey will receive funding for survey of pests that include chilli thrips; in State Survey, a state may choose a general “Thrips” survey, and receive funding through that route.

**Plant Board Meetings** – task force members will work to hold discussions at the upcoming meetings on the issue of cooperation from growers; cooperation is very limited if positive properties are identified in reference to having chilli thrips.

**Subject Matter and Commodity Groups** – these groups will be revised by e-mail (Lance O.)

**Geographic Distribution Map** – Matt C. reported that he’s still getting information from Florida; he needs to distinguish between new detections and established populations; in Texas, only a few new detections have been made, but it will be necessary to follow up on one county.

**Economic Analysis** – Lynn Garrett has completed the analysis for crops; needs to incorporate ornamentals and landscapes; will work with people who are involved with urban landscaping; we’ll also need to consider economic losses in crops we export.

**Next Call: Thursday, April 10, 2008 (2 – 3 pm; ET)**