European Pepper Moth (EPM)
Technical Working Group
Conference Call
(3:00 – 4:00 pm; EDT)

Participants & Self Introductions:

Lance Osborne (Co-Chair, TWG) UF
Jim Bethke (Co-Chair, TWG) UCCE
Rob Ahern (APHIS-PPQ) CPHST Analyst- New Pest Advisory Group Report
Julieta Brambila (APHIS-PPQ) Entomologist, Identifier
Surendra Dara (UC Co-op Extension) Entomologist, strawberries and vegetables
Dan Gilrein (Cornell Co-op Extension) Vegetables and tree crops
Jim Hayden (FL-DPI) Lepidopterist, pyralid specialist
Stephanie Stocks (UF) education, sitting in for Amanda Hodges
Charlie Mellinger (Glades Crop Care) Crop consultant, IPM in SE US
Graeme Murphy (Canada – OMAFRA) Extensive experience working with EPM
Cristi Palmer (IR-4 Ornamental Horticulture Program Manager) Tools to growers
David Riley (UGA) Vegetable entomologist
Hugh Smith (UF) Vegetable entomologist
Steve Tjosvold (UCCE) Developed LBAM BMPs for nurseries
Lin Schmale, (Chair, ILG) Society of American Florists
Diane Schuble (APHIS-PPQ, EPM Task Force Coordinator)

Discussion: Lance filled the participants in on how PPQ formed the task force. PPQ had discussed issues with States and the National Plant Board, all agreeing it was not feasible to keep EPM as a quarantine pest. Lance provided a handout summary in email. All States agreed to deregulate and to the development of a management plan to assist Industry. The Task Force will have a Technical Working Group (TWG) of scientists looking at what avenues it is in, how bad an impact it will have, and tools available. The TWG will look at detection and survey techniques and how to minimize its impact. Dave asked, is it a greenhouse or field problem? To date, it has only been found in ornamentals in the field. Jim B observed there is heavy damage to succulents in greenhouses. It is well established in landscapes. Graeme said it is an issue in greenhouses using highly organic media, and documentation from Europe supports this finding. No info is found in mineral soil situations. Charlie said in monitoring pepper fields there was no damage seen. Lance said it is found outdoors in rose production facility, but no damage as of yet. It was also found on begonias and some damage was seen. Graeme commented that he has seen roses to be undamaged – the moth is feeding on the litter.

We need to look for ways to evaluate how serious damage could be on vegetables outdoors. Stephanie is looking at literature from Europe and read that strawberries have been damaged in Italy in greenhouses on leaves, stems and fruit. She is verifying with the author if any damage was noted outdoors. Hugh asked if anyone has any colonies. Jim B has one & finds they are easy to rear, using commercial media & rose leaves. Steve asked about damage in the landscape

and no one reports any, though it is definitely established. We haven't yet found where the larvae are feeding. Jim H brought up a study on a related species in SE Asia mangrove that feeds on detritus, which is an interesting comparison. Peppers from Holland have been stopped for EPM (Also herbs from Israel). No known attacks on material growing underground, only on the ground and under pots.

The group examined EPM's status. CA will not regulate it since it is far too advanced. It is unclear whether FL will regulate. USDA will not regulate and a SPRO letter is being drafted to announce that decision.

Lance stated that we have to keep in mind we don't have funds. The plan is to break into subcommittees and group members should identify where they feel their strengths lay. Steve mentioned that the LBAM BMPs are available on the CDFA website and he will provide the link to Lance. The material is grower friendly with many photos. Lin asked if EPM will be a severe threat to the vegetable industry and Jim B responded that we just don't know yet. He has seen significant damage on poinsettias and begonias. Will it be a spotty problem or consistent? We need to watch what happens in southern FL. Dave said that in GA, it isn't known for field damage, but will threaten greenhouses which are a sizable industry.

Lance said let's use email to settle into the subgroups. They will be 1) Diagnostics, detection & survey, 2) Management, 3) communication, and 4) Practical biology and ecology. Stephanie is working on translations and checking if we have the same chemical options in the US as in Europe. She noted the literature says water traps are effective. Do we need to engage the aquatic plant industry? Duponchelia fovealis is also known as the Southern European marshland pyralid. Lance will talk to people about this and whether to monitor on wetlands. Speaking of hosts, Rob brought up that it can be difficult to determine through records. Species where traps are hung are not necessarily the host. It does seem to be a generalist though. Can we learn its natural enemies?

In closing, Stephanie will check in with Amanda. Email your links/documents to Lance for the website. A priority list is needed and Jim B will start it. The next call is pending.