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RSPM#1 NAPPO REGIONAL STANDARD FOR PEST FREE AREAS

INTRODUCTION

Pest-free areas are considered as an available potential phytosanitary measure that can be utilized for the issuance of a phytosanitary certificate which permits the movement of regulated plants and plant products in international commerce. Pest-free areas can be described as falling into three distinct categories:

- A. A whole country,
- B. An uninfested area of a country in which a quarantine pest is known to occur, but is of limited distribution, has not yet reached the limits of its ecological range and is being officially controlled, or,
- C. A portion of a generally infested area which is free of the pest and is being officially protected.

This NAPPO standard is intended to address point C, i.e., a specific portion of a generally infested area which has been either found free of a pest or is made free of the pest through specific actions and is then protected from infestation or reinfestation.

Within a pest-free area three categories of quarantine pests are of concern:

The target pest(s) *per se*, i.e., the quarantine pest(s) specified in the work plan,

Other quarantine pests which occur within the pest-free area, but which are only encountered as contaminants (hitchhikers) on shipments, and,

Other quarantine pests that do not occur in the proposed pest-free area but which may be introduced and for which there is an agreed survey and action plan.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard is to provide a basis for the phytosanitary certification and post harvest movement of plants, plant products and other regulated articles from an area without the need for the application of additional phytosanitary measures.

PEST-FREE AREA STANDARD

I. Definitions

The following definitions are utilized in this Standard:

- A. **Area** : "an officially defined country, part of a country, or all or parts of several countries."
- B. **Official**: "established, authorized or performed by a National Plant Protection Organization."
- C. **Pest**: "any biotic agent capable of causing injury to plants or plant products."
- D. **Pest free area**: "an officially identified area in which a target pest does not occur and is maintained as such ."

E. **Quarantine pest**: "a pest of potential economic importance to the area endangered thereby and not yet present there, or present but not widely distributed and being officially controlled."

II. Factors to be considered by a National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) to be considered in determining the feasibility of establishing a pest-free area:

- A. Technology exists to establish and maintain an area pest-free.
- B. The program is operationally feasible.
- C. Basic legislation and regulations permit NPPO to carry out all necessary activities to establish and maintain a pest-free area.
- D. NPPO provides assurance that the necessary technical expertise exists to exclude, detect, and control quarantine pests.
- E. A jointly developed work plan containing operational and administrative procedures and guidelines exists between the NPPOs of the importing and exporting countries.
- F. Close cooperation of all parties involved can be obtained, especially the affected industry and the NPPOs of the exporting and importing countries.

III. The establishment of pest-free areas is based upon the following criteria:

- A. Determination of Target Pest Absence
 - 1. Preliminary assessment of the pest-free status of an area by the NPPO at origin.
 - 2. Verification survey(s) conducted within the proposed pest-free area for specified periods of time at a degree of sensitivity that will ascertain the presence of target pests at detectable levels.
 - 3. Validation of survey(s) by the NPPO of the importing country including acceptance of survey methods and findings against predetermined and/or standard criteria.
- B. Effective NPPO directed regulatory controls exist to prevent the introduction and establishment within the proposed pest-free area of:

1. Target pests.
2. Other quarantine pests known to attack the host but not known to occur in the proposed pest-free area.
- C. Effective NPPO directed actions are in place to preclude the incidental contamination of shipments by hitchhiking quarantine pests known to occur in the proposed pest-free area.
- D. Emergency response capability exists under the guidance of the NPPO in the proposed pest-free area and provides for immediate delimitation, containment, and eradication of target pests and other quarantine pests; or, in the case of potential hitchhiking quarantine pests, to preclude their contamination of shipments which have been certified.
 1. Emergency response capability includes a detailed action plan and provides for resources to carry out that plan.
 2. Actions will be carried out for a specified period of time in accordance with the biology of the pest or pests.
 3. An effective reporting system which will immediately alert the NPPO of the importing country if target pests or other quarantine pests are detected; or of outbreaks of potential hitchhiking quarantine pests.
- IV. Maintaining pest-free areas:
 1. Official detection survey(s) will be conducted indefinitely throughout the pest-free area at a level sufficient to detect incipient infestations of target pests and other quarantine pests, and to monitor populations of potential hitchhiking pests.
 2. Effective regulatory actions continue to prevent the introduction and establishment of target pests and other quarantine pests and to preclude contamination of shipments by hitchhiking quarantine pests.
 3. Appropriate emergency actions are taken immediately by the NPPO to delimit, contain, control and eradicate any outbreaks of target pests or other quarantine pests, and to control or suppress threatening outbreaks of potential hitchhiking quarantine pests.
 4. Joint monitoring of activities as specified in the work plan by the parties involved.
- V. Termination of Pest-Free Status:
 - A. Cause for termination includes one or more of the following:
 1. Establishment or reestablishment of target pests within the pest-free area.
 2. Establishment of other quarantine pests within the pest-free area.
 3. Unmanaged populations of potential hitchhiking quarantine pests occur within the pest-free area.
 4. Recurring regulatory breakdowns fail to exclude target pests or other quarantine pests.
 5. Failure by the NPPO in the exporting country to maintain effective detection surveys in the manner specified in the work plan.

6. Failure by the NPPO in the exporting country to take appropriate emergency action in response to the detection or outbreak of a target pest, another quarantine pest, or potential hitchhiking quarantine pests.
 7. Detection of a target pest or other quarantine pest at any time during the inspection of the host commodity for export, at the time of entry into the importing country, or at a later point in time.
 8. Repeated interceptions in the importing country of hitchhiking quarantine pests in shipments.
 9. Any blatant violations or disregard of the procedures or guidelines outlined in the joint work plan or other agreement.
 10. Failure by the NPPO in the exporting country to adequately administer the mutually agreed program.
- VI. Reinstatement of area to pest-free status:
1. Following a declaration of eradication, the absence of target pests or other quarantine pests can be determined through verification surveys, or,
 2. Outbreaks of hitchhiking pests have been managed to a level acceptable to the importing NPPO, and,
 3. Any deficiencies as noted under point V above have been corrected to the satisfaction of the NPPO of the importing country.
- VII. Work plans in support of a pest-free area should consider, at a minimum, the most appropriate:
- A. Survey methodologies, levels of detection, trapping densities, service intervals.
 - B. Identification capabilities, routing of specimens, and reporting of laboratory findings.
 - C. Regulatory measures for protection of the pest-free area.
 - D. Quarantine procedures (inspections, tests, surveys or treatments) to protect the pest-free area.
 - E. Emergency actions and responsibilities.
 - F. Public and industry involvement strategy - compliance through education.
 - G. Commodity inspection and certification procedures.
 - H. Actions to be taken when other host-quarantine pests are detected.
 - I. Safeguarding of host product before, during and after packing.
 - J. Routing of commodity.
 - K. Program reporting requirements and lines of communication.

- L. Program monitoring, evaluation reviews, and other oversight responsibilities.
- M. Quality assurance of trapping, inspection, and certification activities.
- N. Responsibilities of all parties involved, including the affected industry, NPPOs of the exporting and importing countries, and others as appropriate.

W. T. Bradnock
Executive Committee _____
Canada

B. Glen Lee
Executive Committee _____
United States

Marco Antonio Carreón Zuñiga
Executive Committee _____
Mexico

Ottawa, Ontario
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ⁱ The expression "to control pests" is to be interpreted to mean "to suppress, contain or eradicate pest populations."