



GROWING BETTER:

A Systems Approach to Nursery Certification (SANC)

Overview

Certification of nursery stock for intrastate, interstate, and international shipping has become increasingly challenging for industry and regulatory agencies due to higher shipping volumes, increasing regulated pest pressure, more rigorous shipping requirements, and dwindling resources. The National Plant Board (NPB) is looking into the feasibility of incorporating a Systems Approach to Nursery Stock Certification (SANC) to enhance existing programs.

Goals

To develop, promote and implement a risk based nursery certification system utilizing existing state authorities and programs to enhance uniformity, increase efficiency and reduce pest distribution threats.

Concepts and Approach

The NPB SANC Workgroup strongly believes that current state baseline nursery certification and quarantine programs are sound. We also recognize the opportunity to reduce pest risk and improve assurances by building on and improving existing systems. This can be accomplished by:

- Promoting a harmonized risk-based systems approach to enhance nursery certification processes while recognizing varying states' authorities and industry needs.
- Developing education and outreach materials for both regulatory agencies and industry that describe the components and benefits of a risk-based systems approach.
- Providing uniform training materials and inspection templates to help state inspectors identify critical control points (CCPs) in nursery production, and best management practices (BMPs) to address them.
- Updating and revising the model nursery law.
- Developing examples of compliance agreements and other systems approach components.
- Transitioning to a voluntary risk based systems approach that allows for participating nurseries to ship interstate and to Canada without onerous load by load shipping point inspections, but still meet specific quarantine requirements, blending with existing certification programs such as the US Nursery Certification Program and Japanese Beetle Harmonization Program where appropriate.

Benefits

We envision a *voluntary* system that focuses resources to more effectively manage risk. One size doesn't fit all and there may be up-front costs, but there also will be overall process improvement and long-term benefits, including *reduction in pest risk, cost efficiencies, more direct interaction between nursery staff and regulators, increased uniformity among state programs, and a tiered approach to certification that supports the expertise and economic means of individual producers and the market.*

The NPB welcomes the input of all stakeholders as we review our current processes and search for new risk-based approaches that better meet the needs of the industry and regulatory communities.