

Prevention/EDRR Working Group
Quarterly Meeting Notes
October 22, 2021 10:30 to 12:30pm

Attendance: Mike Melzer (UH-CTAHR), Helmuth Rogg (HDOA), Becky Azama (HDOA), Jonathan Ho (HDOA), Rob Hauff (DLNR), Jenee Odani (UH-CTAHR), Helen Sofaer (USGS), Rebecca Chong (CBP), Dorothy Alontaga (APHIS), Springer Kaye (BIISC), Elizabeth Speith (MISC/HISC), Chelsea Arnott (HISC), Danielle Frohlich (SWCA Consultants), Craig Kaneshige (HDOA), Raynette Inouye (HDOA), Janis Matsunaga (HDOA), Chris Kishimoto (HDOA), Chuck Chimera (HPWRA), Darcy Oishi (HDOA), James Aut Fleming (HDOA), Forest & Kim Starr (MISC); Janet Ashman (HI Farm Bureau), Kailee Lefebvre (CGAPS), Christy Martin (CGAPS), Stephanie Easley (CGAPS)

1. **Introductions:** Co-chairs Mike Melzer and Helmuth Rogg welcomed the Prevention/EDRR Working Group (WG) and thanked Becky for all her work serving as co-chair this year. We did introductions.

2. **Regulatory Updates.**

a. Rebecca Chong provided an update on CBP activities. For the first quarter of FY 2022 (October through December) CBP plans to take a deeper dive into the following:

- For sea cargo branch, working with HDOA to look at coconut products, looking for beetles and diseases;
- For mail branch, working with USFWS to look at mail, parcels etc. from Palau; and
- For air cargo branch, working with HDOA to look at risks in food stuffs, including breadfruit, pandanus, house hold goods that include food, from Micronesia.

Rob raised the issue of *Phellinus* noxious spreading through breadfruit propagative material from Micronesia. Darcy noted HDOA did a training for CBP on *Phellinus* noxious a couple of years ago, as it could spread on many commodities. Rebecca indicated CBP would be interested in another training on this topic. Dorothy noted that breadfruit is included under *Artocarpus* spp. which is NAPPRA for all countries, so foreign countries will need to request market access to U.S. and then go through risk assessment and mitigation.

b. Dorothy Alontaga provided an APHIS update, noting that APHIS continues its work at the Plant Inspection Station going through what CBP finds.

c. Jonathan Ho provided an update from HDOA-PQB, including:

- PBQ is rolling out a new data collection system called Kupono. The old system, called Invicta, is no longer used. Kupono will keep all manifests, intra- and interisland, and pest hotline data, and other data in one place.
- PQB is working to address staffing issues. Currently, Becky is acting as PQ Branch Manager, Jonathan is Compliance Chief, Adam Park is acting as airport supervisor, Kalani Watson is the acting airport Master journeyman, and Trenton is back on aquatics. A number of inspectors have retired and subsequently, some ports, such as Kona, are down in staff. PQB has hired a new inspector on Maui, anticipates onboarding a new inspector on Oahu next month, and is re-working through the hiring process for a new inspector in Hilo after the prior selection turned down a job offer.
- PQB staff are preparing for Christmas tree season. First shipment is expected November 7th.

- PQB continues to work on coqui issues in Waimanalo and Palolo Valley.
- PQB continues its work intercepting unlawful imports, including catching yet another skunk in July and, following up on information from DAR, intercepting an illegal coral shipment.

The issue of importation of myrtle species for religious purposes was raised. Celebrations of Jewish holidays may include importing a bundle of plant material from Israel that includes myrtle, willow, and other species. The NAPPRA rule restricts plants for planting for myrtle but nothing for cut materials. So, cut myrtle from Israel is able to come in because it's coming from a foreign country. HDOA had to enforce myrtaceae rules at a synagogue and worked with that synagogue to source materials locally. Christy suggested HDOA send a letter to all synagogues in the State with info about myrtaceae prohibitions and risks. Janet and Danielle offered to help with outreach.

3. Welcome Dr. Rogg: New Co-Chair, Dr. Helmuth Rogg, HDOA Administrator for the Plant Industry Division, gave a slide show of his awesome career, including:

- Worked on the most successful biocontrol project in the world – cassava mealybug and cassava spider mite that came to Africa and devastated cassava. Found a parasitic wasp for the mealy bug and predatory phytoseiid mites for cassava mites.
- Worked as professor at La Paz University in Bolivia. Worked on Vinchuca that lived in thatched roofs, among many other projects.
- Worked in the Galapagos on Santa Cruz Island. Worked to successfully eradicate on goats on Isabela Island, LFA control, quarantine programs, and Dengue fever, among other areas.
- Worked for 17 years at the Oregon Department of Agriculture, including work on Gypsy Moth, Japanese Beetle, and Christmas tree exportation, among many others.
- Owns a lavender farm in Oregon where he grows lavender for bouquets and essential oils.

The WG gave him a warm welcome!

4. On-gong Tasks:

a. Firewood Pathway: Rob Hauff provided an update on this task. The task group met once on August 31. The focus was on identifying firewood for sale in Hawaii and sources of local firewood available. Mike and Janis set up spread sheets to collect data on firewood for sale and local sources of firewood. The group was interested in HDOA adopting restrictions on firewood imports. Helmuth and Jonathan said that PQB is moving forward with chapter 70 HAR rules for firewood. Dorothy noted that the Federal USDA APHIS Miscellaneous and Processed Products Import Manual covers heat treatments for soft and hard wood (https://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/manuals/ports/downloads/miscellaneous.pdf). The group will meet again in November follow up on our progress and see if there is anything the task group can do to assist HDOA in drafting the rules.

b. Pathways of Introduction: Helen Sofaer and Danielle Frohlich provided an update on this task. They presented and discussed two draft lists the pathways task group has drafted. Both lists are available for review and comment.

The first is a proposed updated non-regulatory Hawai'i Priority Prevention Species List which modifies the prevention list created last year and adds pathway information for each species. The pathway category and subcategories are from the Convention on Biological Diversity pathways categories. There

were a lot of comments that the species originally listed on the HI Priority Prevention List were not highest risk to HI.

The second is the Flagship Invasion Prevention Species by Pathway list. This draft list identifies a “flagship” species for each pathway of introduction. “Flagship” in the list means these could be a “poster child” or representative for certain pathways. If a "flagship" species does enter HI, it could serve to highlight that pathway for examination to identify gaps. This list could be used in outreach and efforts to motivate making resources available.

Dorothy noted it would be helpful if this list could include whether the species are not known to occur in the United States. We could use that information to take and submit species to NAPPRA. That would benefit not just Hawaii but the U.S. The terrestrial plants listed on the old list were taken from the ones proposed on the Restricted Plant List which were not known to occur in the U.S. Rachel Neville is contracted to work on list of species to submit through NAPPRA some of which are on this list. Chuck noted that the task group added plants that are more likely to come into Hawaii from other States.

Dorothy noted that vegetables must be labelled with their country of origin. Does HDOA have a mechanism for labeling country of origin? Jonathan mentioned that origin is built into the restrictions at this time. If the area is not restricted for a pest, the plant can enter HI. State inspectors do try to assist Federal inspectors if they are aware of an issue.

c. Communication Protocols Task: Mike Melzer provided an update on this task. Protocols for communicating new pest discoveries/detections in different counties between CTAHR and HDOA have been put in place. Mike has provided PQB a set of likely scenarios for the movement of biological material or other samples by CTAHR researchers. A six month follow-up meeting between appropriate HDOA Plant Industries officials and UH-CTAHR faculty and staff is scheduled for Tuesday, November 16, 2021.

d. Diagnostic Tools for Early Detection: Mike Melzer and Dr. Jenee Odani, UH-CTAHR Extension Veterinarian, provided an update on this task. The task goal is to develop a list of plant, poultry, and livestock pathogens, and arthropods, plants, and other pest species that pose a high risk to Hawaii’s agricultural and terrestrial ecosystems and to determine if there are diagnostic capabilities for these high risk pathogens somewhere in the State. He is working with UH, HDOA, and HDOH to identify these diagnostic capabilities. Mike has added 4 or 5 new diagnostics to the plant list and he is continuing to develop more. Jenee gave an overview of the work her lab does with respect to invasive species, including:

- Working on animal diagnostics, including developing molecular diagnostics, especially for aquatic species
- Surveillance for other animals diseases that are of interest to local producers
- Surveillance for fish diseases
- Work on ticks and interest in conducting a tick survey.

Jonathan mentioned that PQB requires pre-certification for some animals like shrimp and certain fish to have them certified as disease/pathogen free prior to import.

e. Noxious Weed/Seeds: Becky provided an update on this task. Becky is moving forward on the changes to the chapter 67 noxious weed seed regulations. HDOA is reviewing the changes to the

noxious weed rules, chapter 68 submitted by Stephanie in preliminary form. Helmuth agreed to work on the noxious weed part of the task. Stephanie will follow-up with Helmuth.

5. New Task/Discussion:

a. CRB Task: This is a new task to support HDOA's efforts to prevent the intra- and inter-island spread of Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle. HDOA is looking to regulate the movement of greenwaste both intra and inter-island to prevent the spread of CRB. HDOA hopes to enter into compliance agreements that could be done fairly quickly with H-Power and Hawaii Earth Products and come up with an interim rule to slow the spread of CRB. They are hoping to have a plan of how to move forward in the next week or two.

Janet noted the spread of backyard composting, including multiple people bringing greenwaste to one site where it could be processed and sold. We need to be on top of it at the legislature next session. Helmuth is looking for the most efficient way to address greenwaste, which also spread Japanese beetle in Oregon.

Rob asked if HI Earth Products finished compost products remove all the beetles. Darcy indicated that the composting process will take care of all life stages of the beetle. CRB is largely contained but the populations are increasing in the contained area. They want greenwaste processors to go through a process that kills the beetle and does not spread the beetle.

CRB have attacked native palms at Leeward Community College and there is worry that if CRB continues to spread they could damage wildland populations of native palms.

The help Helmuth is looking for is related to outreach. How to market and convince small producers why you shouldn't move your greenwaste.

b. Planning: Dorothy Alontaga discussed a project to eradicate Plum Pox Disease in the U.S. She has provided the following material on the successful project:

A three year sampling period was successfully completed for the last remaining area of Plum Pox Disease on the U.S. mainland. The outbreaks were in counties of Pennsylvania, Michigan, and New York. Even though the disease was not only in one area and not all at the same time, persistence seems to have worked coupled with a not having the most serious strain. The affected hosts represents a large U.S. agricultural industry.

Details of the eradication steps is found in <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/plum-pox/background-eradication> and other information at the USDA Plum Pox site: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/plum-pox>

Besides the three year negative sampling period to ensure eradication, and not involving the most virulent of the PPV strains:

- International, federal, and state quarantines in effect
- Compliance with, and enforcement of all related quarantines
- Risk assessment
- Trace back

- Identified and engaged the whole community, land owners and other entities, not just farmers but, households, state, Native American, components of the stone fruit industry, universities, and private industry
- Collaboration with USDA Agricultural Research Service, state Departments of Agriculture, universities, and private expertise
- Sampling methodology - information available due to prior outbreaks in foreign countries (although failed eradication)
- Testing plus quality control and backup testing
- Removal of suspect trees, including ornamental hosts and proper destruction.
- Control of vectors
- Prohibiting PPV-host plant propagation including ornamentals in the regulated areas of infested states
- Availability of pox-resistant varieties
- Maintenance
- Perseverance see the factors of 20 years of fighting plum pox
<https://tellus.ars.usda.gov/stories/articles/eradicating-the-plum-pox-virus/>

This project could be used as a model to plan in Hawaii for high risk introductions.

6. Mike wrapped up the meeting, thanked participants, and indicated we will set a date for the next quarterly meeting which will be in January 2022.