

Single Source Exemption C200716  
Term: 5/11/09 – 5/10/10  
Cost: \$491,000

The Department received an exemption from the “Contract Reporter” requirements to enter into a single source agreement with Cornell University, for Plum Pox Sample Analysis.

## **Program Background**

Plum Pox Virus (PPV) is a pathogen of strict quarantine significance. It has been targeted for eradication from North America by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Following the discovery of the PPV in stone fruit (fruits with pits, such as peaches and plums) in an orchard in Pennsylvania, the USDA identified the need to conduct a national survey. Because this disease was not known to occur in the United States prior to 1999, little was known with respect to the techniques needed to detect and confirm its presence in orchards and nurseries.

High-risk states such as New York, Michigan and Maryland were directed by USDA-APHIS to conduct samples at a greater intensity than other states due to their association with reported detections in nearby Pennsylvania and Ontario, Canada.

For 2009, an expanded survey requires that stone fruit production areas in Long Island and the Hudson Valley be mapped and that producers are notified of the survey, its purpose and its importance. Survey crews must be identified, hired and provided training to maintain the sample quota set for the state by USDA/APHIS/PPQ. The laboratory staff hiring and preparedness must correlate with that of the PPV survey crews, as samples cannot be stored for long periods of time.

The expanded survey will require a start date of May 18<sup>th</sup> to insure our target of 163,000 samples are obtained by the end of September. The federal government is requiring proof that those production areas of the state outside of that portion of western New York State bordering Lake Ontario are free of PPV; otherwise, all stone fruit production areas of the state will be considered infested with PPV and subject to stringent regulations.

The Department did not have a projection for what USDA was requesting until January 2009, and it took several months to develop a plan of work and to project stone fruit acreage in the different counties to estimate the total number of samples we would need to obtain. Failure to secure this contract in the timeframe specified will not only jeopardize the grant award, but also impact the federal cost share of the compensation package paid to stone fruit producers to

cover PPV production losses (total compensation paid to New York growers to date is \$735,242).

### **Selection Rationale**

Because of its designation as a pathogen of regulatory significance, laboratories associated with the handling and testing of suspect samples must have a federal permit. Testing facilities are subject to regulatory inspections and must incorporate strict federal protocols for receiving PPV suspect material.

Cornell's laboratory at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva is the only federally approved facility for PPV testing in New York State. The only other approved labs that we are aware of are the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Lab in Harrisburg, and the Federal lab at Beltsville which only confirms positive samples submitted from PA and NY.

### **Justification of Costs**

The USDA determines the price per sample and approves the quote from the lab to be contracted. The projected cost of \$491,509 was submitted to USDA for review and approval. The federal government costs out the reagents, equipment and personnel required to run the projected number of samples. If it fits within their own projections they authorize us to include it in our financial plan.