



## **The National Clean Plant Network (NCPN) – Farm Bill Section 10202**

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**The Farm Bill – H.R. 6124 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008** – became law in June 2008. **Section 10202** directs the USDA Secretary of Agriculture to establish the “National Clean Plant Network” (NCPN), a program under which a partnership of clean plant centers is organized for diagnostic and pathogen elimination services to produce clean propagative plant material and maintain blocks of pathogen-tested plant materials in sites located throughout the United States. Clean plant material may then be made available to States for certified clean plant programs and to private nurseries and producers. In carrying out the NCPN, USDA shall consult with State departments of agriculture, land grant universities, and non land grant colleges of agriculture. Additionally, to the extent practicable, and with appropriate State and industry input, NCPN shall use existing Federal or State facilities to serve as clean plant centers.

### **NCPN – A Brief Program History**

At its core, the NCPN is a collaborative effort among three USDA agencies; the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for quarantine and regulatory programs, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) for technology and germplasm issues, and the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) for outreach and partnership initiatives.

As a concept, however, the NCPN began in November 2006 when a steering committee, with representatives from the nursery industry, the grower community, the National Plant Board (NPB) and other state regulatory agencies, the land-grant university system, and USDA was formed to review existing “clean plant programs”, prioritize a list of specialty crops for funding, and propose an NCPN implementation process.

A national workshop sponsored by APHIS at Riverdale, Maryland in May 2007 was held to implement the NCPN and introduce the concept to a broader stakeholder base. This workshop developed the NCPN mission and vision statements and initiated drafting an NCPN strategic plan.

Basic to the NCPN concept are stakeholder driven, specialty crop focused, clean plant governing bodies composed of interested state, university, association, and industry partners. In 2007, 2008 and early 2009 stakeholders representing fruit trees (pome and stone fruits) and grapes worked to form NCPN recognized governing bodies entrusted with harmonizing and networking clean plant activities for their crop groups under the NCPN banner. Other specialty crop stakeholders are also currently discussing potential NCPN program collaboration.

The NCPN held a general meeting in Washington, DC in March 2009. Highlights of the meeting included clean plant program progress reports, an introduction of a draft NCPN business plan, the installation of the NCPN Governing Board, and a discussion on NCPN Farm Bill program funding strategies. At this meeting, the NCPN Federal partners signed a Memorandum of Understanding, setting the programs cornerstone.

### **NCPN Mission**

The NCPN provides high quality asexually propagated plant material free of targeted plant pathogens and pests that cause economic loss to protect the environment and ensure the global competitiveness of specialty crop producers.

### **NCPN Vision**

The NCPN’s regional centers of excellence are recognized leaders in the introduction of the highest quality, regionally adapted, true-to-type propagative plant materials that are free of targeted plant pathogens and pests, thus promoting a vigorous commercial environment and the opportunity for international trade while protecting the environment of North America. Translational research, education and extension initiatives are fully funded to maintain the network’s high quality collections and strengthen its services. Industry, research and regulatory communities collaborate

to ensure an abundant supply of healthy specialty crops. The economic, environmental and social sustainability of specialty crop industries and the improved economies of the communities that depend on these industries are the ultimate impacts of the NCPN's robust service delivery.

### **NCPN Program Strategies**

The draft NCPN business plan outlines five strategies and associated goals that are central to NCPN program implementation and ultimately to project funding:

- Organization, Governance, and Structure
- Program Operations
- Methods and Technologies development
- Extension, Education, and Outreach
- Program Performance, Quality Assurance, and Review

### **NCPN Information**

Additional information about NCPN can be obtained by viewing the following Federal documents:

- [Farm Bill 2008 – Section 10202 “National Clean Plant Network”](#)
- [Draft NCPN Strategic Plan](#) (May 2007 version)
- [Draft NCPN Business Plan](#) (March 2009 version)
- [NCPN Federal Memorandum of Understanding MOU](#) (Signed March 26, 2009)

### **NCPN Cooperative Agreements Program Funding FY 2010**

On April 22, 2010 the NCPN Cooperative Agreements Program for FY 2010 was initiated by the publishing of its 'Request for Applications' (RFA) in Grants.gov. Applications must be received by June 18, 2010. A copy of the NCPN FY 2010 RFA is available here for reference:

- [NCPN Cooperative Agreements Program Announcement](#) (PDF; 91Kb)
- [Direct link to Grants.gov NCPN Cooperative Agreements Program Announcement](#)

### **Links to NCPN Internet Resources**

The Stakeholder Driven NCPN Website at the University of California – Davis

- <http://groups.unanr.org/ncpn/>

### **Contact Us Email Address**

- [NCPN@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:NCPN@aphis.usda.gov)