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Subject
Greenhouse Certification Program.

The United States Department of Agriculture Animal (USDA) and Plant Health Inspection Service is committed to stakeholder consultations as a valued aid to effective decision-making. The USDA is notifying United States stakeholders of planned changes to the Canada/United States Greenhouse

Certification Program (GCP) and to solicit stakeholder input on the contents of an authorized plant list that will replace the list of plants currently excluded from the program.

Please distribute this material among your associations and their members to reach the broadest cross section of traditional and non-traditional

stakeholders. We encourage you to take the time to review the consultation material and advise your associations and their members to do the same. We ask that you, your associations and their members please send comments to michael.d.ward@aphis.usda.gov and include the phrase "GCP comments" in the subject line of the email, prior to October 31, 2010.

Background

The Greenhouse Certification Program (GCP) is a bilateral program designed to facilitate the movement of low phytosanitary risk, greenhouse-grown plants between Canada and the United States. Facilities participating in the GCP implement measures to ensure that eligible plants are grown, stored, packed and shipped free of regulated pests of concern for the receiving country. In return, facilities in compliance with the GCP have increased flexibility when shipping. In the context of the GCP, greenhouse-grown plants are those plants commonly known and recognized as indoor foliage and flowering plants and those categorized as bedding plants intended for planting either indoors or outdoors.

It is recognized that due to varying climatic conditions between Canada and the United States not all plants produced under the GCP are produced in traditional greenhouses. Many plants may not be able to survive outdoors in cooler regions of Canada and the United States but may establish outdoors in warmer areas of the United States.

Current Status

Currently, the GCP contains lists of plants that cannot be certified under the program. The use of 'excluded plant lists' has proven to be problematic in that it causes ambiguity and may lead to inconsistencies in its interpretation and/or application. A copy of the 'excluded plant list' that applies to U.S. greenhouses may be found in the document at this link: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/acns/downloads/canadian_greenhouse.pdf

Planned Change

The GCP is being amended and one of the significant changes to the program is to replace the list of excluded plants with a list of plants which are approved under the program. The use an 'authorized plant list' will

increase program clarity and improve program compliance. The authorized plant list is being developed to include as many low phytosanitary risk greenhouse plants as possible. The list will include most greenhouse plants that currently move in trade between Canada and the United States under the GCP. The authorized plant list will clearly state which plants will be eligible under the GCP in both Canada and the United States. The same list will be used in both countries.

The authorized plant list will include two types of plants - those that pose very little phytosanitary risk and those with risk mitigation measures that reduce their phytosanitary risk to a very low level. When risk mitigation measures are required, the specific measure(s) they will be identified in association with the specific plant on the authorized plant list. Examples of possible risk mitigation measures include requiring propagation from seed or tissue culture or ensuring that a particular plant is grown exclusively in greenhouses.

In recognition of changing trade patterns and changing risk levels, protocols have been developed to allow for the amendment of the authorized plant list. Participating facilities may request additions to the authorized plant list. The request will undergo a joint Canada/United States evaluation and, if approved, the plant will be added to the list. If phytosanitary conditions change so that it becomes necessary to remove a plant from the authorized plant list, this decision will be conveyed to participating facilities in a timely manner.

Attached you will find:

Proposed Approved Plant List by Family

Proposed Approved Plant List by Genus

Protocol to Request Additions to the GCP Authorized Plant List

Application for the Addition to the GCP Authorized Plant List

Protocol to Remove Plants from the GCP Authorized Plant List

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