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WVDA 2018 Cooperative Agricultural Pest Surveys Underway

Charleston, WV – The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) has started conducting early detection trappings and surveys throughout the state. The goal of the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey program (CAPS) is to detect any new, non-native pests and to monitor the impact of native agricultural pests. This includes: specific exotic plants, diseases and weeds identified as threats to forests and agriculture lands in West Virginia.

"Our staff is on the front line of protecting some of our most valuable natural resources. The sooner we detect invasive species, the better we can mitigate damage," said Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "The hope is to preserve West Virginia's natural beauty for generations to come."

The program functions as a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on specific pest-control issues. The program aims to support export certification programs and contributes data to the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS) and Integrated Plant Health Information System (IPHIS) computer databases.

"We have always tried to take a proactive approach to detecting these species so we can incorporate control measures earlier," said WVDA Plant Industries Director Tim Brown. "We cannot fully stop all these pests, but we can limit the impact they have on our forests and farming lands."

The WVDA staff, through CAPS and Farm Bill agreements, will be setting over 500 insect monitoring traps in varying trees and crops to screen for any new introductions of harmful plant pests. This year we will be placing traps in cherry, oak and pine trees as well as corn, peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, soybean and small grains. Trappings will take place from May to early September.

For more information on these surveys please, contact Susan Parker at 304-788-1066, sparker@wvda.us.

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture protects plant, animal and human health through a variety of scientific, regulatory and consumer protection programs. The Commissioner of Agriculture is one of six statewide elected officials who sits on the Board of Public Works..

