What if Citrus Greening is the Beginning of Future Pest & Disease Issues in US Agriculture?

March 11, 2015
Citrus Greening – AKA Huanglongbing

• Considered to be the most serious disease of citrus (NAS 2009)
  – Bacterial disease
  – Insect vectored
  – First found in FL in 2005

• Coming on the heels of the citrus canker eradication project
  – Grower aversion to removing trees
Public Enemy #1

Insect Vector -

*Diaphorina citri* – Asian citrus psyllid; discovered in FL, June 1998, now widely distributed
2 counties
HLB Increasing Throughout the State
April, 2006

12 counties
14 counties
HLB Increasing Throughout the State
June, 2007

24 counties
HLB Increasing Throughout the State
February, 2008

30 counties
HLB Increasing Throughout the State
August, 2008

32 counties
How Fast Does it Spread? Oct06-Mar07
How Fast Does it Spread? Apr07-Jul07
How Fast Does it Spread? Aug07-Oct07
The Florida Grower Journey
Pictures of same grove and trees exhibiting disease over time.
Snapshots in time......

April 19, 2007

December 16, 2008

April 23, 2009

September 23, 2010
June 13, 2012
• Representatives of appropriate agencies.
• Provided overview of total process on identification of new pest issue.
• Question – How would APHIS grade response and performance to the ACP?
  – Broader and more full USDA response needed.
  – Lack of process/system to ensure appropriate coordination and action.
  – Going forward, more proactive and faster reaction to identified pest issues with strong future coordination and direction immediately.
Summary

• HLB Citrus Greening Disease has been confirmed in the U. S. since 2005.
• Significant financial support from the USDA is now in place.
• What if the HLB disease is an indication of future Pest and Disease issues that could impact U.S. Agriculture?
• How can the USDA be more proactive in addressing a similar situation?
The Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee would like to commend the various functions and personnel of APHIS on their efforts and support of the Florida (and U.S. Citrus) industry in the current challenges faced by the industry in dealing with the Huanglongbing (HLB) greening disease. However, in retrospect, the overall response to the control of the insect vector, the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP), could have identified sources of funding for research and development of control procedures in a more expeditious manner.
Research Subcommittee Recommendations

• #1 – USDA should seek to develop a preemptive program for the identification of invasive pests and diseases that can have potential total destruction effects on current agricultural commodities.

• #2 – USDA should assign one (1) intra-agency function to be the coordinating entity to manage the total process for identified pest and disease issue(s), with supporting efforts from all other USDA functions as appropriate.