

related to the policy or standard being considered.

Proposals drawn up by the individual panels are circulated for review to government and industry officials in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, who may suggest revisions. In the United States, draft standards are circulated to industry, States, and various Government agencies for consideration and comment. The draft standards are posted on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/pim/standards/>; interested persons may submit comments via that Web site. Once revisions are made, the proposal is sent to the NAPPO working group and the NAPPO standards panel for technical reviews and then to the Executive Committee for final approval, which is granted by consensus.

The annual NAPPO meeting is scheduled for October 20–24, 2003, in New Orleans, LA. The NAPPO Executive Committee meeting will take place on October 19, 2003, and a special session will be held on October 20, 2003, to solicit comment from industry groups so that suggestions can be incorporated into the NAPPO work plan for the 2004 NAPPO year. The Deputy Administrator for APHIS' PPQ programs is a member of the NAPPO Executive Committee. The Deputy Administrator intends to participate in the proceedings and will discuss or comment on APHIS' position on any standard up for adoption or any proposals to develop new standards.

The work plan for 2003 was established after the October 2002 Annual Meeting in Oaxaca, Mexico. The Deputy Administrator for PPQ participated in establishing this NAPPO work plan (see panel assignments below).

Below is a summary of current panel assignments as they relate to the ongoing development of NAPPO standards. The United States (*i.e.*, USDA/APHIS) intends to participate actively and fully in the work of each of these panels. The U.S. position on each topic will be guided and informed by the best scientific information available on each of these topics. For each of the following panels, the United States will consider its position on any draft standard after it reviews a prepared draft. Information regarding the following NAPPO panel topics, assignments, activities, and updates on meeting times and locations may be obtained from the NAPPO homepage at <http://www.nappo.org> or by contacting Mr. Nancy Klag (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above).

#### *1. Accreditation Panel (Inspector Accreditation)*

This panel will work towards facilitating the proper implementation of the standard "Accreditation of Individuals to Sign Federal Phytosanitary Certificates." A review of the U.S. system was conducted in June 2001, and a review of the Canadian system was conducted in early 2002. A review of Mexico's system was conducted in June 2003. A written report was to be provided to the Executive Committee at its meeting in July 2003.

#### *2. Biological Control Panel*

This panel will work on developing a standard for biological control facilities.

#### *3. Biotechnology Panel*

This panel will continue to develop a NAPPO standard for the review of products of biotechnology that focuses on the assessment of the potential to present a plant pest risk. Modules on the importation into contained facilities and confined release into the environment have been completed. It is anticipated that the module dealing with unconfined release into the environment will be completed in 2003. A draft for the final module, importation for uses other than propagation, will also be developed.

#### *4. Citrus Panel*

The panel will continue to work on the standard for the entry of citrus propagative material into NAPPO member countries and will include consideration of mites and insects.

#### *5. Forestry Panel*

The panel will work on trying to harmonize, between NAPPO countries, the implementation of the international standard for wood packaging material.

#### *6. Fruit Panel*

The panel will finalize the standard, "Areas of Low Pest Prevalence." This standard should be approved by the NAPPO Executive Committee in 2003.

#### *7. Fruit Tree Panel*

The panel will begin development of a standard on "Guidelines for the Importation of Fruit Trees." This panel will also continue to develop a concept paper on "The Movement of Propagative Material, which may lead to the development of a standard at a future date."

#### *8. Grapevine Panel*

This panel will expand the current version of the NAPPO grapevine

standard to include other significant pests such as nematodes and insects.

#### *9. In Transit Panel*

The panel will begin development of a NAPPO standard that outlines the phytosanitary procedures to be followed for regulated articles that pass through a "third" country on their way to the destination country.

#### *10. Pest Risk Analysis Panel*

This panel will coordinate NAPPO input on the development of the IPPC standard entitled "Pest Risk Analysis for Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests."

#### *11. Phytosanitary Alert System*

This panel will finalize the NAPPO standard on pest reporting. The standard should be approved by the Executive Committee this year.

#### *12. Potato Panel*

This panel will review and revise the NAPPO Potato Standard pest list and finalize a revised standard for NAPPO Executive Committee approval.

#### *13. Standards Panel*

This panel is responsible for the following: Providing updates on standards for the NAPPO newsletter; coordinating the review of new and amended NAPPO standards and ensuring that comments received during the country consultation phase are incorporated as appropriate; organizing conference calls and preparing NAPPO discussion documents for possible use at the IPPC; and promoting implementation of recently adopted IPPC standards. The panel will finalize a NAPPO standard for implementing the recently adopted IPPC standard "Notification of Interceptions and Non-Compliance," and will finalize a standard for developing bilateral workplans.

The PPQ Deputy Administrator, as the official U.S. delegate to NAPPO, intends to participate in the adoption of these regional plant health standards, including the work described above, once they are completed and ready for such consideration.

The information in this notice includes all the information available to us on NAPPO standards currently under development or consideration. For updates on meeting times and for information on the working panels that may become available following publication of this notice, check the NAPPO Web site on the Internet at <http://www.nappo.org> or contact Mr. Nancy Klag (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above). Information on official U.S.