



## *Texas PD Program Enters 4th Year*

### **Introduction**

April 1, 2006 marks the beginning of the fourth year of research and extension activities designed to understand and help growers manage Pierce's disease in Texas. The 2006 allocation for these activities is once again \$1.2 million and in addition, the Texas APHIS office has budgeted approximately \$300,000 to manage and service trapping stations across the state. This issue of Texas PD Notes, written on the cusp of the fiscal year of this program is designed to give growers an overview of what the program is doing and how it functions.

### **Administration & Process**

The Texas Pierce's Disease Research & Extension Program is now under the direction of a three member administrative team. Dr. Kevin Heinz, department chair of Entomology has the lead roll in this group and is joined by Dr. Tim Davis, chair of Horticultural Sciences and Dr. Dennis Gross, chair of Plant Pathology & Microbiology. Last fall, the administrative team put out a call for proposals across the A&M system and included researchers from other cooperating institutions. On Tuesday, December 13th,

research and extension personnel seeking funding were given a chance to orally present their written proposals to the administrative team and members of the Texas PD Grower Advisory Board. Proposals were rated and prioritized and funding decisions were made. In March, 2006 APHIS and researchers met for a review prior to submission. The final plan of work and associated budgets will be reviewed by APHIS colleagues and administrators to ensure funded activities are needed, sound and do not duplicate other effort. Final approval is expected on or near April 1.

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## *Texas Pierce's Disease Survey Activities*

There are currently two surveys taking place in Texas and their scope and direction are related but still entirely separate.

### **Insect Survey**

The insect survey is being conducted in approximately 50 vineyards across the state. This effort seeks to understand what potential vectors occur across the state, their relative abundance, and seasonality. Sticky traps are placed in and in some cases on the

periphery of vineyards across the state. Texas APHIS personnel are responsible for servicing these traps and making sure the cards are kept in good condition until they are delivered to researchers for counts and identification. This information is valuable in numerous ways. While vector presence does not necessarily constitute impending PD infection, this knowledge can help growers select sites with reduced PD risk. Under-

standing population dynamics, in other words when we expect these insects to appear in the vineyard is extremely important in the timely and responsible use of management tactics. APHIS personnel are working to complete a web-based vehicle for participating growers to receive timely data on insect activity in their vineyards and for the general public to receive regional insect activity data.

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