

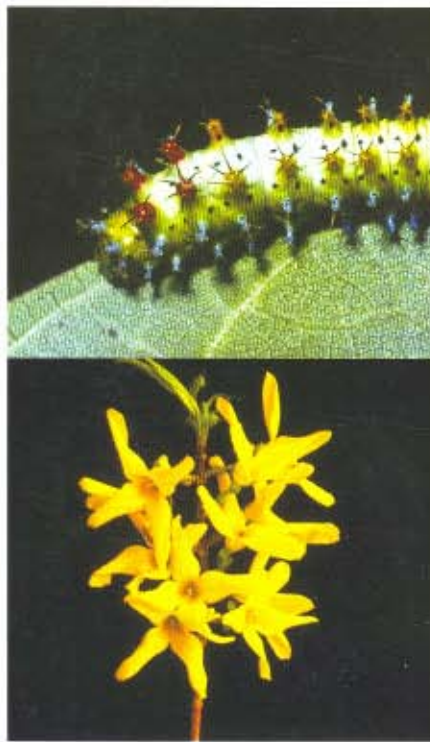
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2004 Annual Report • Plant Protection Section

# Nursery Inspection and Export Certification Unit

Mark Schreiber, Supervisor





## Overview

The Nursery Inspection & Export Unit administers Minnesota Statutes (2003), Chapter 18.H. These statutes were originally established in the early 1900's and formerly called The Plant Pest Act. Over the years, the language has been updated, fees established and in 2003, program funding became dedicated through program revenue. But the goal of the statutes has remained unchanged for nearly a century: through the statewide nursery inspection program, unit staff prevents the introduction into, and spread within Minnesota of serious plant pests and ensures that nursery stock grown and sold in Minnesota is free of exotic plant pests.

The Nursery Inspection Program is staffed by program coordinator Steven Shimek, nursery inspectors Lola Youngblom and David Simmons and administrative assistant Lorraine Englund. Two inspector positions are vacant due to previous staff retirements. The goal is to fill one in spring 2005 and the other in fiscal year 2006.

The unit also cooperates with the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine program in the federal Export Certification Program. Unit staff is responsible for inspecting and certifying agricultural products such as grain, seeds, logs, lumber and many processed products to ensure they meet the import regulations of the destination country. Staff also serves as the important first contact for many exporters in their quest to establish a presence in the international marketplace.

Doree Maser is the Export Program Coordinator and conducts all day-to-day operations. Steven Shimek issues over 300 nursery export certificates during the winter months. Willem Schrage, Darrell Anderson and Mike Horken are stationed in East Grand Forks. Officially part of the Seed Potato Certification Program, they are trained cooperators and issue export certificates for seed potato growers as well as some sunflower exporters in northwest Minnesota. David Simmons conducts export-related certification inspections in north central Minnesota. Blane White, Invasive Species Unit, helps in the St. Paul office.



## Nursery Inspection Program

### First line of Defense:

#### **Auditing out of state nursery stock certification.**

State nursery laws generally require that stock shipped interstate must be certified at origin. In recent years this has become extremely important. Pests such as Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, pine shoot beetle, gypsy moth and Japanese beetle infest parts of many eastern states from which nurseries supply Minnesota nursery stock dealers. Inspectors visit nursery stock dealers who receive stock from high risk states, review their shipping documents and confirm the stock came from certified nurseries and have proof of compliance for all applicable regulated plant pests.

### Pest-free Minnesota stock:

#### **Grower inspections.**

To ensure Minnesota-grown nursery stock is free of serious plant pests, nursery inspectors travel throughout the state to 337 growers with nearly 8,000 acres of growing stock.

#### **Dealer Inspections.**

To assure that stock shipped into the state is free of pests and is accompanied with the required pest free certificates nursery sellers are required to obtain a nursery stock dealer certificate. 2,568 Nursery Stock Dealer certificates were issued in 2004.

### Major Accomplishments:

- Conducted 278 nursery inspections at nursery dealer sites. 115 Violations resulted in 2,299 plants restricted.
- Conducted 330 grower inspections. 164 violations resulted in 10,573 plants restricted or destroyed.
- Conducted 64 inspections at Christmas tree wholesale distributor and retail sites.
- Nursery inspectors cooperated with the USDA, APHIS, PPQ to contain and eradicate a second introduction of *Ralstonia solanacearum*, race 3, biovar 2 at nine Minnesota firms. Approximately 10,000 geraniums shipped from Guatemala were ordered destroyed.

### Improving Public Awareness:

#### **Educational Outreach**

- Education and outreach display at MNLA, Green Expo, Shade Tree Short Course the Minneapolis Home and Garden Show, the Saint Paul Home and Garden Show and the North Dakota Nursery Association winter meeting.

Steven Shimek presented exotic plant pest reports at Minnesota Green Expo, Minnesota Department of Transportation Landscape Training, Shade Tree Short Course and the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee.





## Export Certification Program

### Education Comes First:

#### **Certification Requirements**

There are no "export" requirements to ship agricultural products overseas. Shipments must meet pest-free conditions established by the importing country. Export Program staff are responsible for reviewing the standards set by each country for each commodity and ensuring the exporter understands what is needed to obtain certification of the product.

### Export Certificates:

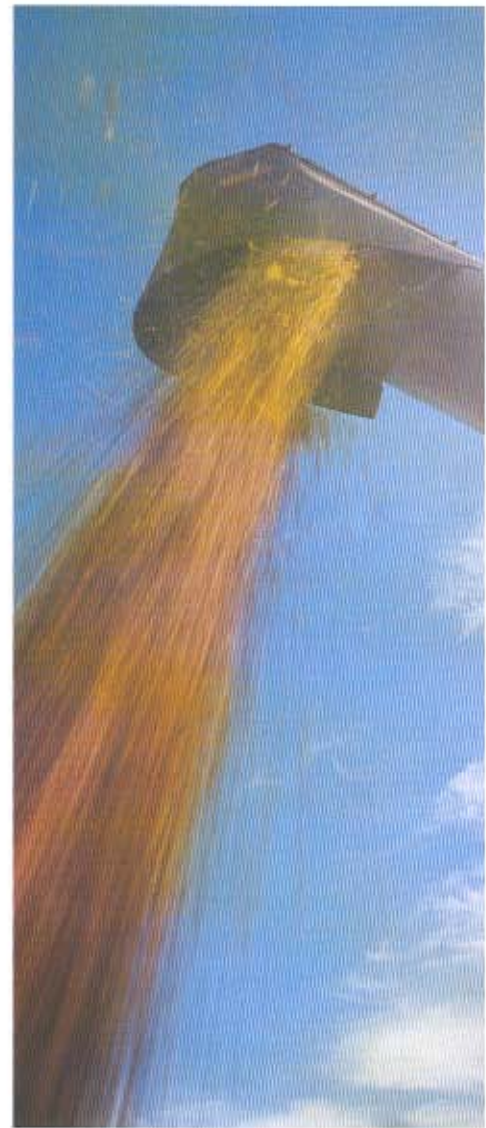
#### **An Ever-changing Menu**

Export Program staff must determine which certificate meets the needs of the shipment. Corn shipped to west coast states needs a European Corn Borer Certificate. Most products shipped overseas are covered by either a phytosanitary certificate or processed product certificate.

Countries can change their entry requirements or demand new documents for imports. In recent years Canada has demanded small grain rail shipments using Canadian railroads be accompanied by a certificate of origin. China implemented a requirement that all coniferous solid wood packing material be certified with a heat treatment certificate. New forms have developed and printed to meet these new regulations.

### Major Accomplishments

- Issued 2,573 export documents with an accuracy greater than 97% and no shipment rejections at foreign ports.
- Provided certification to export:
  - 2,758,107,205 pounds of corn,
  - 150,540,001 pounds of wheat,
  - 6,259,800 pounds of barley,
  - 10,272,687 pounds of soybeans,
  - 8,472,679 pounds of soy flour and
  - 4,220,036 pounds of sunflower grain
- 124 companies exported Minnesota products to 66 countries.
- Inspected 97 sites covering 3,280 acres of corn, edible beans and soybeans for export certification.
- David Simmons and Blane White became Accredited Certification Officials for the Export Program.
- Provided monthly billing for export customers.
- Japanese beetle trapping and soil sampling for nursery export certification.



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