

likely to be present; (2) a survey program adequate to detect any additional infestations of plum pox virus that may be present; and (3) a control program to remove all infested orchards. Initial action was taken by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA). The PDA has instituted a quarantine that encompasses the two townships that include the area where plum pox virus is now known to be present. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (the Department) intends to establish a parallel Federal quarantine of this area.

It is essential to the control and eradication of the plum pox virus that orchards known to be infested be removed promptly, along with any additional orchards that are determined to be infested in surveys to be conducted this spring. The Department has reviewed the measures being taken by Pennsylvania to survey, regulate, and control plum pox virus and has consulted with the Governor of Pennsylvania. Based on such review and consultation, the Department has determined that Pennsylvania does not have authority or funds to compensate growers for the removal of infested orchards. Without such funds, it will be unlikely to achieve expeditious removal of the orchards.

The infestation of plum pox virus represents a threat to U.S. stone fruit crops. It constitutes a real danger to the national economy and a potential serious burden on interstate and foreign commerce. Therefore, the Department has determined that an extraordinary emergency exists because of the existence of plum pox virus in Pennsylvania.

In accordance with 7 U.S.C. 150dd, this declaration of extraordinary emergency authorizes the Secretary to: (1) Seize, quarantine, treat, apply other remedial measures to, destroy, or otherwise dispose of, in such manner as the Secretary deems appropriate, any product or article of any character whatsoever, including means of conveyance, that the Secretary has reason to believe is infected by or contains the plum pox virus; and (2) quarantine, treat, or apply other remedial measures to, in such manner as the Secretary deems appropriate, any premises, including articles on such premises, that the Secretary has reason to believe are infected by or contaminated by the plum pox virus. The Governor of Pennsylvania has been informed of these facts.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This declaration of extraordinary emergency shall become effective January 20, 2000.

**Dan Glickman,**

*Secretary of Agriculture.*

[FR Doc. 00-4988 Filed 3-1-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-34-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Agricultural Research Service

#### Notice of Federal Invention Available for Licensing and Intent To Grant Exclusive License

**AGENCY:** Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and intent.

**SUMMARY:** Notice is hereby given that the Federally owned invention U.S. Patent No. 5,968,541, issued October 19, 1999, entitled "Composition and Method for the Control of Diabroticite Insects" is available for licensing and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, intends to grant to Florida Food Products, Inc., of Eustis, Florida, an exclusive license to Serial No. 08/917,852.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before May 31, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to: USDA, ARS, Office of Technology Transfer, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Room 4-1158, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5131.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** June Blalock of the Office of Technology Transfer at the Beltsville address given above; telephone: 301-504-5989.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Federal Government's patent rights to this invention is assigned to the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture. It is in the public interest to so license this invention as Florida Food Products, Inc., has submitted a complete and sufficient application for a license. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within ninety (90) days from the date of this published Notice, the Agricultural Research Service receives written evidence and argument which establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

**Richard M. Parry, Jr.**

*Assistant Administrator.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 00-008-1]

#### Public Meetings; Imported Fire Ant

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service plans to hold four public meetings to discuss issues related to how we should administer our imported fire ant program in light of reduced funding.

**DATES:** We invite you to comment on this docket. We will consider all comments that we receive by May 1, 2000.

The public meetings will be held in: (1) Raleigh, NC, on March 21, 2000; (2) Orlando, FL, on March 23, 2000; (3) Austin, TX, on March 28, 2000; and (4) Santa Ana, CA, on March 30, 2000. Each public meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and is scheduled to end at 5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** If you cannot attend a public meeting, please send your written comment and three copies to: Docket No. 00-008-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 00-008-1.

You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

The public meetings will be held at the following locations:

(1) Raleigh, NC: Wake County Commons Buildings, 4011 Cary Drive, Raleigh, NC.

(2) Orlando, FL: Radisson Barcelo Hotel, 8444 International Drive, Orlando, FL.

(3) Austin, TX: Clements Building, Committee Room 5, 15th and Lavaca Streets, Austin, TX.