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## 47<sup>th</sup> NAPPO Annual Meeting



Dear NAPPO stakeholders,

From October 22-24, 2024, NAPPO held its 47th Annual Meeting, hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ), in Tucson, Arizona.

The NAPPO Annual Meeting provides a forum for the national plant protection organizations (NPPOs), industry, and other stakeholders from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and around the world to advance regional standards, address emerging plant health issues, and identify opportunities for improving safe trade in our region.



Participants at the 47th NAPPO Annual Meeting in Tucson, Arizona.

Ethan Holmes, USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Senior Policy Advisor, and Jessica Mahalingappa, Associate Deputy Administrator of PPQ International Phytosanitary Management and Standards Programs at APHIS PPQ and Chair of the NAPPO Executive Committee, provided the opening remarks. Arop Deng, representing the IPPC Secretariat, provided a video welcome message.

I also want to express gratitude to our keynote speaker, Juan Villanueva, Director General of Mexico's School of Graduate Studies (COLPOS, as per its Spanish acronym), who presented an overview of COLPOS and the different research and education programs of the most prestigious agricultural research institution in Mexico.

During the meeting, the Secretariat recognized John Greifer with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his outstanding contribution and lifelong dedication to plant health protection and preservation throughout North America and worldwide through his contributions to the IPPC (please see John's article in this Newsletter issue). Hugo Arredondo, Bob Baca, and Vessela Mavrodieva were also recognized for their exceptional contributions and collaboration as expert group members from NPPOs and industry.

We incorporated 2024 NAPPO Work Program updates into the meeting agenda (seeds health, forestry, alternative to methyl bromide, biocontrol, and others). Mexico, Canada, and the United States also provided government and industry reports. I thank the members of our Industry Advisory Group for their valuable contributions and participation.

The symposium covered two topics: 1) methyl bromide reduction through a risk-based approach that emphasized alternatives to this fumigant, including economic and management information, and 2) the implementation of standards and documents developed by NAPPO. Both symposium topics were well attended and provided relevant information to stakeholders.

Additional information about the Annual Meeting, including the final report, speaker presentations, pictures, and more, is now available on the NAPPO Annual Meeting webpage ([www.nappo.org/english/47th-NAPPO-Annual-Meeting](http://www.nappo.org/english/47th-NAPPO-Annual-Meeting)). I hope these materials will be useful to both participants and those who wish to benefit from the information shared. I want to thank all those who contributed presentations to the Annual Meeting and to the organizing committee.

I thank those who completed the Annual Meeting survey and provided feedback. Your input is essential in helping us plan and organize the 48th NAPPO Annual Meeting, which will be held in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, on October 2025. Please stay tuned for more information!

Once again, I sincerely thank you for your participation and contribution to making this meeting a success.

Javier Trujillo Arriaga  
Chief Scientist  
[Javier.Trujillo@nappo.org](mailto:Javier.Trujillo@nappo.org)

# The NAPPO Executive Committee Approves 2025 Work Program and Agrees to other 2025 Secretariat Business

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The NAPPO Executive Committee, along with the Advisory and Management Committee (AMC), Industry Advisory Group (IAG), and Secretariat met on October 20, 2024, in Tucson, Arizona, on the margins of the 47<sup>th</sup> NAPPO Annual Meeting. Jessica Mahalingappa (PPQ) chaired the meeting.

The main purpose of the Executive Committee is to:

- provide leadership and strategic direction to NAPPO
- approve the NAPPO Annual Work Program
- approve the NAPPO annual budget and review the annual financial statements
- adopt NAPPO Regional Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (RSPMs) and other NAPPO documents

The main outcomes of the meeting include:

- The Committee members and IAG members from Canada, the United States, and Mexico provided relevant updates.
- The Committee approved the 2025 NAPPO Work Program based on recommendations from the AMC. The 2025 NAPPO Work Program will be available on the NAPPO website ([www.nappo.org](http://www.nappo.org)). The Committee decisions for the 2025 Work Program included:
  - Adding the new project “Revision of RSPM 8: *Authorization of individuals to issue phytosanitary certificates*”.
  - Keep the updated project proposal “Best practices for collecting, handling, and using biological control agents in North America” on the waitlist. This project will begin once the Revision of RSPM 26 project is complete.
  - Removed from the waitlist the project “Review of selected Lymantriid and other species that could be considered for inclusion in the Asian gypsy moth vessel certification program for North America”.
  - Removed from the waitlist the project “Comprehensive review and update of quality management (QM) related terminology within RSPM 5: NAPPO glossary of phytosanitary terms” and approved the AMC recommendations to make ink amendments to RSPM 5.
- The Committee approved the 2025 NAPPO budget, and travel plan.
- The Committee, AMC, IAG, and Secretariat exchanged information on partnering with international organizations and upcoming international meetings.

- The Committee approved the development of possible Standard Operating Procedures documents that require Executive Committee approval. In addition, the Committee discussed the availability of information technology platforms for collaborative work with expert groups and the assistance of NPPO experts on specific tasks for NAPPO.

Contact your country's AMC member for additional information on the Executive Committee ([www.nappo.org/english/directory/advisory-and-management-committee](http://www.nappo.org/english/directory/advisory-and-management-committee)).

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## NAPPO participates in the 36<sup>th</sup> IPPC Technical Consultation Among RPPOs (TC-RPPOs)

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Javier Trujillo (Chief Scientist), Alonso Suazo (Technical Director), and Nedelka Marín-Martínez (Interpreter/Translator) participated in the 36<sup>th</sup> TC-RPPO meeting held from October 1-4 in Panama City, Panama. The Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Vegetal (OIRSA) and the International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat chaired the meeting. OIRSA and NAPPO provided simultaneous interpretation in English and Spanish.

The ten RPPOs meet annually to promote and discuss interregional collaboration in the development and use of harmonized phytosanitary measures. The meeting was an opportunity for NAPPO to strengthen relationships with the other nine RPPOs; promote NAPPO priorities, perspectives, and approaches, and learn about other regions' primary concerns, issues, and priorities as they relate to plant health.

The Chief Scientist provided an overview of the NAPPO organization and mission and updates on the 2024 work program. He also proposed including a concept note for the IPPC Bureau's consideration for a scientific session for the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures meeting in 2025 (CPM-19 (2025) or CPM-20 (2026)), on the use of Artificial Intelligence in the phytosanitary community.

Contact Javier Trujillo for more information: [Javier.Trujillo@nappo.org](mailto:Javier.Trujillo@nappo.org).



Participants at the 36th TC-RPPO meetings in Panama City, Panama. Photo courtesy of the IPPC

# NAPPO participates in the 98<sup>th</sup> National Plant Board Meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan

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Javier Trujillo (Chief Scientist) and Alonso Suazo (Technical Director) participated in the 2024 National Plant Board Meeting, which was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from July 21 -25. The meeting provided an opportunity for the new Chief Scientist to network with members of the United States Federal and State regulatory agencies.

The Technical Director provided updates on the most recent organizational changes within NAPPO, including new NAPPO leadership and changes to the United States membership on the Executive Committee.

The Technical Director also provided updates on the 2024 NAPPO Work Program, including progress reports, projects that have been completed in 2024, and new proposed projects that are being considered for the 2025 NAPPO Work Program.

Contact Alonso Suazo for more information: [Alonso.Suazo@nappo.org](mailto:Alonso.Suazo@nappo.org).

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## 2024 NAPPO Work Program Updates

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**Alternatives to methyl bromide.** The alternatives to methyl bromide writing subgroup met in the margins of the 47<sup>th</sup> NAPPO Annual Meeting in Tucson, Arizona. The subgroup produced a draft document that is now ready for further discussion with the expert group. Expert Group members Bob Baca (APHIS PPQ), Adnan Uzunovic (Canada Wood), and Virna Stillwaugh (Northwest Horticultural Council) also participated in the Annual Meeting symposium topic on Alternatives to Methyl Bromide.

The NAPPO Secretariat would like to congratulate Bob Baca on receiving an award at the NAPPO Annual Meeting for his outstanding leadership and contributions on the alternatives to the methyl bromide project.

**ToBRFV Seeds.** The journal “PhytoFrontiers” has accepted for publication the manuscript titled “*Pilot for harmonization of diagnostic protocols for Tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV) in tomato and pepper seeds*”, which identifies protocols for the detection of ToBRFV in tomato and pepper seeds. The Expert Group recommends the adoption of these protocols in the three NAPPO member countries (Canada, the United States, and Mexico). The Executive Committee is expected to adopt the decision at its next meeting in February 2025.

The NAPPO Secretariat would like to congratulate Vessela Mavrodieva (APHIS PPQ) on

receiving an award at the NAPPO Annual Meeting for her outstanding leadership and contributions to the Seeds ToBRFV project.

### **Revision of NAPPO Regional Standard for Phytosanitary Measures 26 (RSPM 26) (Certification of commercial arthropods biological control agents or non-*Apis* pollinators moving into NAPPO member countries).**

Work continues on the revision of RSPM 26. The revised version will not include non-*Apis* pollinators. It will include an updated list of biological control agents and updated regulatory information in the three NAPPO-member countries.

The NAPPO Secretariat would like to congratulate Hugo Arredondo (Biobest, Mexico) for receiving an award at the NAPPO Annual Meeting for his outstanding leadership and contributions to the revision of RSPM 26 project.

### **International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) 15 compliance (Evaluating the risk associated with different types of wood packaging materials - opportunities to improve ISPM 15 compliance).**

Expert Group members met in the margins of the 47<sup>th</sup> NAPPO Annual Meeting to discuss project updates and the next steps for the discussion document. The Expert Group continues collecting inspection data on forest pests from the NAPPO region and other regions to evaluate the risks of forest pest introduction associated with different types of wood packaging materials.

**RSPM on Seeds Systems Approaches.** The first virtual meeting with the newly formed Expert Group took place in November 2024. Following a brief self-introduction of the members, the NAPPO Secretariat and members of the Advisory and Management Committee provided an outline, a brief description of the project objectives and tasks assigned, and project timelines. The Expert Group will develop a new RSPM on seed systems approaches. Subject matter experts from the NAPPO region and an observer from the “Comité de Sanidad Vegetal del Cono Sur” (COSAVE, as per its Spanish acronym) will collaborate in the development of this regional standard. NAPPO welcomes Melanie Gauthier and Charlene Green (CFIA); Tracy Bruns, Sarika Negi, and Scott Blackwood (PPQ); Yanell Domínguez Velázquez (SENASICA); Lauren Comin (Seeds Canada); Mario Puente Raya and Marlene Ortiz (AMSAC, Mexico); Ric Dunkle (retired Industry member); Jesus Alcázar (Bayer, Mexico), and Melisa Nedilskyj (COSAVE, Argentina).

**Phytosanitary Alert System (PAS).** Between March 27 and July 1, 2024, the NAPPO member countries published 24 Official Pest Reports (OPRs) (22 from the United States and 2 from Canada). The Expert Group continues meeting the IPPC reporting obligations and publishing OPRs.

Contact Alonso Suazo for more information: [Alonso.Suazo@nappo.org](mailto:Alonso.Suazo@nappo.org).

# John Greifer — U.S. Representative to IPPC and NAPPO Retires

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After 35 years of service with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), John Greifer has decided to retire. John spent most of these years working in the international regulatory and trade arena. He served in multiple leadership and strategic committees and posts at the International Plant Protection Convention Secretariat (IPPC) and the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO). His contributions over the years have largely been providing administrative, strategic guidance, support, and direction at these standard setting bodies in addition to leading the United States delegations at these venues.



John's involvement in the IPPC began in 1996 when the IPPC community embarked on a major revision of the Convention. John represented the United States in those negotiations, which modernized the IPPC to reflect science-based quarantine principles and practices, established a Commission and full-time Secretariat, and adopted basic rules and procedures to govern standard setting, expert committees, governance bodies, dispute settlement, and other activities of the IPPC. He also served as vice-chair of the IPPC Commission and chair of the IPPC Finance Committee and played an important leadership role on the Strategic Planning Group (SPG). The SPG provides strategic direction and recommends strategies for improvements to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM). John's contribution and impact to the IPPC was hugely significant, and we are all appreciative and grateful for his generosity, leadership, and friendship.

John played many important roles at NAPPO including coordinating and supporting the transition of the NAPPO headquarter office from Ottawa, Canada, to Raleigh, North Carolina; recruiting two NAPPO Executive Directors; developing the NAPPO strategic and annual work plans; launching new strategic initiatives; and serving as a member of the Executive Committee.

John is grateful to have had the opportunity to work with so many talented and dedicated colleagues both in his home organization and with the many foreign counterparts on international plant health, harmonization, and trade issues. Reflecting on his career, John said:

"I loved the issues, and I loved the people. I felt strongly about our work with foreign counterparts in the region and from around the world aimed at harmonizing our approaches to how we manage and regulate pests and how we treat each other in trade. This was meaningful work to me, and I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to work in this space for the past 30 years."

John and his wife Susan plan to stay in the DC area in the immediate time frame but eventually move back to John's original home state of Michigan and decamp in a community on Lake Michigan. We thank John for his years of service, his friendship, his wise counsel, and good work these past years and wish him and Susan a healthy and joyous journey ahead.

## NAPPO Newsletter

Published by the North American Plant Protection Organization

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