

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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United Nations Declares 2020 International Year of Plant Health

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U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue commended the United Nations' decision to designate 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health. The United States, along with 90 other countries, co-sponsored this resolution to raise awareness of plant health issues and strengthen global efforts in the face of increased trade and climate change.

Secretary Perdue issued the following statement: "I have seen firsthand the damage that invasive pests can do to American agriculture and I applaud this initiative to declare 2020 the International Year of Plant Health. By focusing on this issue for an entire year, we will raise global awareness and encourage collaboration across all sectors of society, from farmers to consumers, industry to government officials, academia and beyond. Healthier, pest-free plants bring higher yields, stronger ecosystems, richer biodiversity, safer trade, and ultimately food security and economic development opportunities for all. None of us can win this fight alone, but as a global community focused on this issue, we can all work together to protect our natural and agricultural resources against devastating plant pests and diseases.

"This is part of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) core mission and APHIS is planning a range of activities for the International Year of Plant Health. I look forward to working with our partners and colleagues across the country and around the world on this important initiative. Our farmers are among the most productive in the world and protecting plant health will help them continue to feed, fuel and clothe people in the United States and beyond."

Visit the www.ippc.int to learn more about the International Year of Plant Health. **GT**