CONTINGENCY FUND

PROGRAM PROFILE

Approved Releases

Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM): APHIS used $128,489 from the contingency fund to support several AGM projects. In FY 1998, the program trapped two AGMs in the State of Washington; one in Seattle and the other in Tacoma. In May 1999, the program treated 640 acres in Tacoma with 3 *Bacillus thruringiensis* (Bt) aerial applications and 60 acres in Seattle with 3 Bt ground applications. The area around these sites were again trapped and no AGM were detected. We will continue surveys at these two sites until the end of 2000. Unfortunately, APHIS trapped one AGM in northern Seattle, which is outside of the previous quarantine area and about ½ mile from the site where the Coast Guard seized a Russian fishing vessel. APHIS inspected this vessel when in port, found a single AGM egg mass, and fumigated the ship. APHIS will delimit this area and conduct a control program, if necessary, in FY 2000.

APHIS also conducts port and waterway detection surveys for AGM through the Agricultural Quarantine Inspection program. In FY 1999, APHIS placed 6,674 traps in Washington and 1,653 traps in Oregon; APHIS found no detections of AGM in all 8,327 traps. This is a promising result since AGM population in the Russian Far east is increasing and international trade and commerce activities have increased the opportunity for new introductions in the U.S. APHIS and the FS cooperate in a program in the Russian Far East that includes survey around the port areas and inspection of AGM on ships leaving high risk ports for North America. This effort supports early detection which is critical in keeping this destructive pest from become established in the U.S.

Brown Tree Snake (BTS): In FY 1999, APHIS used $264,643 of contingency funds to establish program infrastructure and direct the cooperative efforts of the USDA; the Departments of Commerce, DOD, and the Department of the Interior; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Territory of Guam; and the State of Hawaii in implementing an integrated operational control and confinement program to prevent the inadvertent spread of the BTS. The BTS population density on Guam

ranges between 40 and 12,000 snakes per acre, which, combined with the significant movement of military cargo between Guam and Hawaii, poses a serious risk for introducing the BTS in Hawaii. On Guam, the BTS has caused significant ecological, economic, and social adverse effects, such as eliminating many native birds and small lizards, causing power outages costing millions of dollars annually, and affecting the health of small children. APHIS directs the intensive cooperative efforts necessary to reduce the threat of BTS introductions into Hawaii and the continental United States. The program continued the following activities in FY 1999: snake detection training; the use of traps, glue boards, and barriers; nighttime fence-line searches with spotlights; habitat modification; and prey-based removal efforts. APHIS also trained 14 Jack Russell terriers to detect snakes in outbound military and civilian cargo at transportation facilities on Guam. Secondary inspections using detector dogs are conducted upon the cargo's arrival in Hawaii. In addition, APHIS established a protocol for responding to snake sightings in Hawaii.

Brucellosis in a Bison Herd in South Dakota: In FY 1999, we used $2,000,000 of contingency funds to indemnify the owner of the last affected privately owned bison herd in the United States. APHIS depopulated the herd, totaling 1,544 animals, and removed the only barrier preventing South Dakota from becoming Class Free. Another 1,500 animals from previous calf crops were segregated from the main herd and continue to test negative for the disease. The depopulation of the main herd, along with vaccination and frequent testing of the remaining animals, should ensure the elimination of brucellosis from the herd and the eventual movement of South Dakota to Class Free status.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD): In FY 1999, we used $27,000 of contingency funds to provide additional diagnostic testing for CWD. CWD is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy of deer and elk that occurs in limited areas of the Western United States. While CWD is considered rare, the incidence of this disease among species of both wild and domestic ungulates is on the rise. The disease has become of particular concern due to its fatal nature, lack of known prevention or treatment, and its

possible transmissibility to humans. For FY 1999, NVSL tested over 577 submissions from captive herds in Nebraska, Oklahoma, and South Dakota. These submissions were from captive cervids over the age of 18 months that died in participating and/or exposed herds.

Disposal of Cattle Condemned at Slaughter for Neurological Disease: In FY 1997, APHIS released $101,000 of contingency funds to purchase cattle imported from the United Kingdom before the FY 1989 ban. In FY 1999, we used $2,193 to dispose of cattle condemned at slaughter for neurological diseases. As part of the BSE surveillance program in the United States, APHIS and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) sample animals that display neurological disease when presented for slaughter. We prohibit these animals from entering the human food chain and discourage having them enter the animal food chain through rendering.

European Gypsy Moth (EGM): In FY 1999, APHIS used $490,460 from the contingency fund to conduct emergency projects to control EGM. The EGM program conducts control activities in cooperation with States and the FS to eliminate identified isolated infestations. The FY 1999 program included pretreatment delimiting surveys, aerial treatments of Bt, post-treatment delimiting surveys, and egg mass surveys in 9 States outside of the generally infested areas. These States participated on a 50/50 cost-share basis. APHIS supported control activities for Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, and Wisconsin through cooperative agreements. APHIS also conducted and supervised most of the control work in Indiana, Ohio, Utah and Idaho, which involved Bt applications and mass trapping. The program placed pretreatment delimiting surveys at multiple sites at a 25 traps per square mile density to define the extent and location of isolated GM populations for subsequent treatments. APHIS treated 20 small, isolated infestations of approximately 14,000 acres in FY 1999, compared to 31 small, isolated infestations of approximately 16,600 acres treated in FY 1998. The STS program, a cooperative effort between FS, APHIS, and participating States, may be credited for the reduction in infestations. In FY 1999, STS caused a 65-percent reduction in new territory invaded by GM. Based on an economic assessment (Leuschner, Southern Journal of

Applied Forestry 1996), the annual equivalent value of benefits is $29,315 for each mile of frontier the spread rate is reduced.

Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket (GH/MC): In FY 1999, APHIS used $430,000 to participate in the Cropland Protection Programs in Idaho and Utah. These programs protect forage crops adjacent to Federal rangeland from damage caused by migrating grasshopper populations. APHIS funded crop protection programs that occurred on Federal lands after July 16, 1999, through Contingency Funds. Before that date, control programs were funded by cooperators. Overall, APHIS conducted 21 grasshopper crop protection programs--20 in Idaho and 1 in Utah. These programs consisted of survey and evaluation for treatments, environmental documentation, equipment, pesticide, and application costs. The program treated 47,342 acres of Federal land in Idaho and 384 acres of Federal land in Utah.

Imported Sheep from Belgium: In FY 1999, APHIS allocated $1,000,800 of contingency funds to purchase and dispose of sheep imported from Belgium. Between May and December 1996, the United States imported two shipments of sheep, containing 65 animals, from Belgium. Belgium was then found to be infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). For this reason, APHIS was concerned that the remaining 60 animals (5 had died) and their 140 offspring had been exposed to the BSE agent. APHIS initially planned to spend $1,000,000 to purchase these animals before they went to slaughter. However, the herd owners were not able to commit within a reasonable time, so we reallocated the funds to other emergency programs. APHIS will try again in FY 2000 to purchase and dispose of these imported sheep.

Olive Fruit Fly: In FY 1999, APHIS used $429,000 from the contingency fund to participate in a 50/50 cost-share agreement with the CDFA, which conducted an OLFF emergency program in California. The OLFF is capable of damaging over 90 percent of an olive crop and California's olive crop is valued at over $100 million. The APHIS personnel were detailed to the program to conduct and assist with trapping, and monitoring activities. This program began in November 1998, when CDFA initiated

an eradication proclamation and established a quarantine in response to the discovery of over 300 adult flies, mostly in the Los Angeles (LA) area. The CDFA conducted delimiting trapping and attempted to eradicate the pest with aerially applied pesticides. Because of public objection to the use of aerially applied pesticides in urban areas, the program treats each new detection with Malathion ground bait to eradicate the flies. Using this approach, CDFA continues to monitor and limit the spread of the pest within the LA basin; also, it intends to eradicate outbreaks that occur in the commercial olive production areas outside of the LA basin.

Pink Hibiscus Mealybug (PHM): In FY 1999, APHIS used $137,000 of contingency funds to help control the PHM in the Caribbean. This pest infects over 200 host plants - many of economic importance to the Caribbean - and severely disrupts Caribbean agricultural trade and commerce. Also, it poses an extremely serious quarantine risk and could potentially expand its geographical distribution throughout North, Central, and South America. We implemented a biocontrol program in the U.S. Caribbean Territories to suppress pest population densities, avoid significant economic losses, reduce the rate of spread, and delay the pest's establishment in the Continental United States. The Agency's goals are to (1) maintain the St. Thomas Insectary; (2) release exotic parasites in St. Thomas, St. John, St. Croix, and Puerto Rico; (3) continue evaluating the establishment and impact of exotic parasites on the PHM population density; (4) continue training local government personnel in insectary and field operational procedures; and (5) help establish and maintain a self-sufficient insectary in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico facility was expanded to full capacity in FY 1999 to facilitate parasite releases throughout the Main Island, Culebra, and Vieques as needed. Similar biocontrol programs in other locations have yielded highly promising results. For example, successful establishment of parasites are estimated at over 90 percent of the release sites, based on a study at 30 release sites in St. Thomas and St. Croix. This biocontrol program has reduced mealybug population densities by over 90 percent in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, and continues to protect the Caribbean and U.S. mainland from disruptions in agricultural trade and commerce.

Raccoon Rabies in Ohio and Vermont: APHIS responded to new rabies cases outside the oral rabies barriers in Ohio and Vermont by using $150,215 of contingency funds to prevent the westward spread of raccoon rabies in the United States. With these funds, APHIS purchased oral baits for aerial distribution, conducted critical population sampling, and monitored and evaluated the project. Rabies activity between the vaccination zones in northwestern and northeastern Vermont required us to expand the vaccination zone barrier. To maintain the integrity of the established barriers, it is essential that proactive efforts continue to prevent the spread of this disease.

TB in Cervidae: APHIS used $149,946 in FY 1997, $95,131 in FY 1998, and $35,832 in FY 1999 to indemnify owners of TB-infected and/or exposed cervidae and to continue an ongoing TB surveillance project on the Island of Molokai.

TB in Free-Ranging Deer Populations: APHIS used $913,697 of contingency funds in FY 1999 to control TB in free-ranging deer populations in Michigan. The presence of TB in Michigan deer poses a threat to the eradication of bovine TB in livestock and a potential threat to human health. There are several ways in which humans can become infected with bovine TB from deer. Hunters can be affected through contact with bullet-ridden carcasses, slaughterhouse workers can be exposed through tuberculous lesions and by offal matter, and consumers can be affected through the consumption of raw or undercooked meat. The presence of the virus in the Michigan deer population is the first wildlife reservoir of TB recognized in the United States. Since there are no effective vaccines for disease prevention and no effective medication for treatment of wild deer, we implemented a combination of wildlife surveys and deer management actions in FY 1999.

APHIS tested cattle and goats in a five-county area in northeast Michigan and assisted with epidemiological and risk assessment studies. APHIS also depopulated more than 200 exposed captive white-tailed deer. In addition, APHIS supported several cooperative agreements with Michigan State University, Colorado State University, and the State of Hawaii. The Michigan State University study

is ongoing and relates to the Michigan outbreak and the risks associated with tuberculosis. The Colorado State University study is ongoing and relates to various strains of bovine TB. Preliminary data from this study has provided APHIS with valuable information on strain-type differences. The State of Hawaii is conducting an ongoing wildlife study. Preliminary data reveals an infection source in free-ranging swine on the Island of Molokai.

Vesicular Stomatitis Virus (VSV): VSV is a viral disease that primarily affects cattle, swine, and horses. The disease occasionally affects sheep, goats, deer, and raccoons. Humans may also be affected. We used $137,101 in FY 1998 and $7,507 in FY 1999 to control an outbreak which began in May 1998 and ended in January 1999. As of January 22, 1999, APHIS had investigated 230 premises; 131 of these were positive for the virus. We released the last premises from quarantine in January 1999.

Wolf Control: In FY 1999, APHIS used $175,000 to address wolf damage management control issues in Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana to offset the impact on livestock operations of expanding wolf populations and the reintroduction of wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains. The gray wolf recovery in western Montana, central Idaho, and YNP is approaching the target recovery goal of 300. As the wolf population increases, so do incidents of suspected wolf predation on livestock. APHIS responded to approximately 100 incidents of suspected wolf predation in the region, nearly double the number of incidents in FY 1998. Expanding Eastern Timber wolf populations in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin also require us to increase assistance with wolf predation. These expanding populations greatly increase the need for APHIS to investigate the increasing number of suspected wolf depredations, conduct additional aerial operations programs, and continue essential wolf damage management activities.

Summary: In FY 1999, contingency funds were released for the following programs:

FY 1999 OBLIGATIONS

	Available	Obligated	Balance
Asian Gypsy Moth.....	179,000	128,489	50,511
Belgian Sheep.....	158,000	24,245	133,755
Bovine Tuberculosis.....	967,000	913,697	53,303
Brown Tree Snake.....	497,000	264,643	232,357
Brucellosis Bison.....	2,000,000	2,000,000	0
Chronic Wasting Disease.....	110,000	27,000	83,000
European Gypsy Moth.....	643,000	490,460	152,540
Grasshoper/Mormon Cricket.....	850,000	430,000	420,000
Neurological Disease.....	80,221	2,193	78,028
Olive Fruit Fly.....	483,000	429,000	54,000
Pink Hibiscus Mealybug.....	150,000	137,000	13,000
Raccoon Rabies.....	225,000	150,215	74,785
Tuberculosis in Cervidae.....	44,923	35,832	9,091
Vesicular Stomatidis.....	14,899	7,507	7,392
Wolf Control.....	175,000	175,000	0
Unallocated.....	30,306	0	30,306
Total.....	6,607,349	5,215,281	1,392,068

(Balance carried over into 2000)