

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2007-40
September 17, 2007

SUBJECT: Detections of Panicle Rice Mite, *Steneotarsonemus spinki*, in Stuttgart, Arkansas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On September 7, 2007, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of panicle rice mite (PRM), *Steneotarsonemus spinki*, at a rice research facility in Stuttgart, Arkansas. This facility, which is used as an experimental research station, is operated by USDA's Agricultural Research Service. PRM detections occurred within greenhouses at this research facility.

This outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under surveillance. APHIS has notified the Arkansas Department of Agriculture of this confirmed detection and is currently conducting surveys to delimit this infestation on the grounds of the facility. In addition, APHIS' PRM technical working group, which was established in response to the PRM detection in Texas, is considering survey and control strategies in response to this latest detection.

APHIS has issued Emergency Action Notifications to stop movement of all rice seed, rice plants, and plant parts and farm equipment from the affected greenhouses. A trace-back and trace-forward investigation is underway to determine the means of this pest's introduction at this research facility. Managers of the research facility are being fully cooperative in this investigation.

PRM is considered a serious rice pest in China, Philippines, and Taiwan, where it has caused substantial crop losses. Yield losses can range from 30 to 90 percent. APHIS has also confirmed PRM detections at rice research facilities in Texas (July 13), Puerto Rico (August 1), and Louisiana (August 20) this year. There are two main reported hosts of RPM, rice, *Oryza sativa*, and the weedy red rice, *Oryza latifolia*.

For additional details on the Federal response to the detection of PRM, you may contact Regional Program Manager Phil Mason at (970) 494-7565 or Staff Officer Valerie DeFeo at (301) 734- 4387.

/s/ John H. Payne for

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