



February 10, 2022

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) writes to you requesting additional resources and coordination in combating the invasive species *Lycorma delicatula*, known as the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF).

NASDA represents the commissioners, secretaries, and directors of the state departments of agriculture in all 50 states and 4 U.S. territories. State departments of agriculture are responsible for a wide range of programs including food safety, combating the spread of disease, and protecting against invasive pests.

The SLF is an invasive planthopper native to Asia, first discovered in Pennsylvania in 2014. Spotted lanternfly feeds on plants, causing plant stress which can decrease plant health and in some cases cause death. A 2019 economic impact study estimates the SLF could cost the agricultural sector in the state of Pennsylvania \$324 million annually and more than 2,800 jobs. This affect expands beyond Pennsylvania, with USDA-APHIS confirming the presence of the SLF in 11 states.

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, a bipartisan delegation of Congress sent a letter to your office expressing their desire for increased action on the SLF. NASDA shares the delegation's concern regarding the spread and increasing threat of the SLF.

While USDA has provided funding and personnel, it has not added the SLF to the Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) program. Officially recognized programs receive dedicated funding annually as a line item to work towards management and slowing the spread of invasive pests. NASDA asks USDA to add the SLF to the PPQ program, which would complement the efforts by state departments of agriculture in combating this invasive species.

We appreciate your time and consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,

  
**Ted McKinney**  
Chief Executive Officer

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, & please know how much we respect & enjoy the relationships with APHIS, specifically, and NRP generally. Jed

Cc: Kevin Shea, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA