

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20510

December 31, 2025

Dr. Michael Watson  
Administrator  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
George Washington Carver Center  
5601 Sunnyside Ave.  
Beltsville, MD 20705

Dear Administrator Watson:

We write today to respectfully request the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) full and fair consideration of support under Plant Protection Act (PPA) Section 7721, administered through the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program (PPDMDPP) to assist Oregon's management of the Japanese beetle. This funding is critical to address the immediate economic and phytosanitary threat to Oregon's nursery and greenhouse industry posed by the Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) during Oregon's transition period.

Oregon's nursery and greenhouse sector is the state's highest-value agricultural commodity, generating over \$1.2 billion in production value in 2022. However, the Japanese beetle presents an acute risk to this sector and interstate plant health, as the pest feeds on over 300 types of ornamental and agricultural plants.

Oregon is currently approaching a pivotal regulatory transition. Loss of Category 1 status results in increased shipment certification burdens, especially for producers of large-caliper shade trees and ornamental nursery stock.

Current Japanese Beetle Harmonization Plan (JBHP) approved dip and drench treatment pathways are strictly limited to containerized or root ball material 12 inches in diameter or smaller. This limitation is operationally unworkable for much of Oregon's export-oriented shade tree inventory. Without investment in a comprehensive trapping and treatment program, Oregon risks losing practical access to key interstate markets despite strong industry intent to remain fully compliant.

We are requesting USDA's consideration of this funding request while the industry and state pursue local solutions to address this pest. We view APHIS support under PPA 7721 as a force multiplier during this transition, bridging the gap while Oregon builds a sustainable, grower-supported compliance framework.

We request PPA 7721/PPDMDPP funding to support a defined, outcomes-based project that includes:

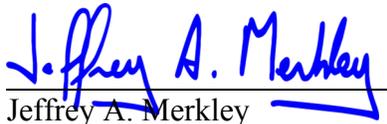
- **Surveillance:** Expanded detection and delimitation surveillance to maintain interstate confidence in Oregon-origin nursery shipments.
- **Capacity:** Scalable nursery compliance and certification capacity, including audits, training, and technical assistance.
- **Treatment:** Targeted treatment of known infested areas and capacity to respond to novel detections to mitigate additional spread.

State-supported eradication operations in 2025 have concluded as authorized and currently are not funded to implement in 2026. This threatens both Oregon producers and the broader Western States plant health perimeter. Oregon's continued containment capacity functions as a practical firewall for the West, reducing infestation pressure on California, Washington, and Idaho.

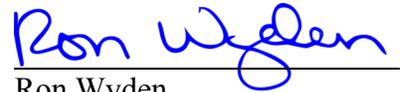
We appreciate APHIS's partnership and respectfully request engagement within the PPA 7721/PPDMDPP framework to structure a fundable 2026–2027 project that protects specialty crops and nursery production systems, consistent with Congressional intent.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



Maxine Dexter  
Member of Congress



Janelle S. Bynum  
Member of Congress



Cliff Bentz  
Member of Congress