

Funding to control invasive species reduces damage

...while establishing effective mitigation techniques



Photo: Aukid Phumsirichat/shutterstock.com

Every Western Region state is wrestling exotic and noxious weeds, destructive insects and disease-causing organisms. Future invasions may compound these efforts. Invasive species are moving from Southeast Asia and the South Pacific into the fragile island ecosystems of other Pacific islands and territories, with potential to expand to Hawaii and the Southern California coast.

Increased research funding to the Western Land-Grant Universities is needed to mitigate the devastating consequences of invasive species.

- Invasive species damage and control efforts cost taxpayers an estimated \$138 billion annually
- Native and exotic insects, nematodes, plants and vertebrates have a dramatic and often negative effect on agriculture and natural resource productivity and ecosystem function
- Changing global climate patterns will shift distribution of pests, and many habitats will become more susceptible to new threats



Photo: Winston Beck, Iowa State University, Bugwood.org

John M. Randall, The Nature Conservancy, Bugwood.org



With adequate funding, the Western Land-Grant Universities are uniquely positioned to:

- Provide more knowledge on invasion biology to better assess risk, prediction and intervention
- Develop innovative techniques for rapid identification through surveillance and detection systems
- Establish effective and economical technologies and tactics to mitigate or control organisms to reduce environmental impact

The Western Perspective & The Western Agenda

What is the Western Perspective & Agenda?

The Western U.S. is facing unprecedented challenges maintaining sustainable urban communities and agricultural and natural resource economies. The Western Perspective & Western Agenda serves to inform policy responses and actions and demonstrates how Land-Grant Universities, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and Cooperative Extension support all Western Region communities sustained by agricultural and natural resources economies.

What are the unique challenges and characteristics of the West?

Every state in the Western Region has densely populated urban areas juxtaposed with large expanses of sparsely populated rural areas. This creates pressure on natural resource and agriculture industries while increasing population brings new demands on local and regional economies—largely dependent on watersheds, ecosystems, infrastructure and federal lands.

The public owns 47% of the land in the West. The majority of Western Region agriculture depends on public lands for livestock and forestry production, and on strong partnerships with federal organizations to sustain the health of ecosystems, agriculture and communities.

Fire, water, climate change, population growth, and invasive pests and diseases are the primary threats to agriculture and communities in the Western Region.

Synergy Between Units

Land-Grant Universities, the Cooperative Extension Service, and Agricultural Experiment Stations have a federal and state obligation to conduct research and outreach, and lead educational programs that address the greatest agricultural and natural challenges of their home state and region.

The collaborative nature between these entities in the Western Region ensure the programs, people and places of the Western Region are able to sustain and thrive with respect to their individual state needs and united regional challenges.

This collaboration is unique and powerful! No other institutions have the scope, resources or capacity to anticipate and respond to the current and future challenges facing the Western Region. The interaction between each entity produces timely information and research from experts at each institution. The depth and breadth of these programs reaches everyone, from the most vulnerable to the most prosperous.

Agenda Priorities

- Sustainable Production Systems: Food Production, Food Safety, Food Security, Forestry and Horticulture
- Natural Resources: Water, Wildlife, Wildfire, Invasive Species, Ecosystem Services and Economic Opportunities
- Energy
- Community and Economic Development
- Youth Development: Agriculture, Nutrition and Natural Resources Science Literacy
- Nutrition and Health: Innovation in Foods for Health

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