Vacancy Announcement for the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) Executive Director

Organization overview

The North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) (www.NAPPO.org) is the regional plant protection organization (RPPO) for North America and its headquarters are in Raleigh, North Carolina, United States. It brings together the national plant protection organizations (NPPOs) of Canada, the United States, and Mexico and its industry partners in the three member countries. Its objectives are to protect the region’s plant resources from regulated pests by developing regional phytosanitary standards and other documents and activities which aim to facilitate safe trade in plants, plant products and other regulated articles.

Position Overview

Highly qualified candidates are invited to submit applications for the position of NAPPO Executive Director (ED). The position is located in Raleigh, North Carolina, and is a 3-year appointment, renewable upon satisfactory performance evaluation of the ED by the NAPPO Executive Committee (EC). The ED manages the programmatic, human, and financial resources of the NAPPO secretariat and plays a leadership role in facilitating and supporting EC planning and decision-making. The ED is responsible for leading and managing the organization for the purpose of implementing the EC-approved annual Work Program (https://www.nappo.org/application/files/9016/8900/4019/20230706_2023_NAPPO_Work_Program-e.pdf) and ensuring that work carried out under the auspices of NAPPO is aligned with the NAPPO Strategic Plan (NAPPO SP) (https://www.nappo.org/english/governance/strategic-plan) and associated budget, as appropriate. The day-to-day operations of NAPPO are managed by the ED. The ED does not represent any of the NPPOs of its member countries but works at the behest of the entire EC, and is attuned and attentive to the needs and priorities of the three NPPOs as reflected in the annual Work Program, the NAPPO SP, or other emerging or urgent issue identified by the EC. Recurring international travel (within and outside North America – average of 6 weeks/year) is required for this position.

Conditions for employment

The candidate must be a citizen or permanent resident of one of the three NAPPO member countries and be eligible to work in the United States. Candidates from Mexico and Canada must be eligible for either an H1B Visa or a TN Visa. Candidates must be willing to relocate to Raleigh, North Carolina. Candidates must also be willing and able to travel internationally (within and outside North America). The candidate may be required to complete a criminal background check once they accept the offer of employment.

Advance Information for Candidates that are Non-U.S. Citizens: NAPPO will accept all applications for the position, in line with the required competencies called for in the Vacancy Announcement and Position Description. However, candidates from Canada and Mexico are advised that there will be visa-related requirements, including related background checks, that will need to be addressed, and which may ultimately be a determining factor in the final selection process.
**Education (or combined Education and Experience)**

A university degree in a relevant field of study to plant protection (agronomy, biology, plant pathology, entomology) or an acceptable combination of education, job-related training and/or experience is required for the position. A doctoral or master’s degree in one of the fields identified above will be considered an asset.

**Essential Experience**

- Demonstrated experience working for or with an NPPO.
- Demonstrated executive and program management skills and abilities.

**Asset Experience**

Experience in one or more of the following plant health areas - pest risk analysis, risk management, surveillance, inspection, import and export trade requirements and certification, international or regional plant health standard setting, methods development (i.e., diagnostics), trade compliance and enforcement, trade agreement negotiations, and development and delivery of plant health policies and programs – will be considered an asset.

Recent work experience with North American plant and plant product stakeholders/interested parties (i.e., industry, state and/or provincial officials, other government agencies, industry associations, academia, exporters, producers) will be considered an asset.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

*Plant Protection*

The NAPPO ED must have:

- Extensive knowledge and understanding of regulatory plant protection practices and of the phytosanitary principles for the protection of plants and the application of phytosanitary measures in domestic, regional, and international settings.
- Knowledge and understanding of the international plant health framework including:
  - the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and its standard setting and implementation activities.
  - the RPPOs, their origins, functions, and roles.
- Knowledge or practical experience with NAPPO or with another RPPO.

*Executive skills*

The NAPPO ED must demonstrate the ability to:

- Bring about and implement strategic change, both within and outside the organization, to meet common goals and stakeholder expectations.
- Lead the organization towards a common vision, mission, and goals.
- Be politically savvy and be attuned to the needs and circumstances of the EC.
- Build networks with government agencies, private sector organizations, and international organizations to achieve common goals.
- Manage projects, including prioritizing multiple deadlines and delegating to meet expected deliverables.
● Work and communicate effectively with colleagues of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.
● Facilitate discussions on contentious issues and be able to build consensus from diverse viewpoints.
● Manage human, financial, and information resources strategically.
● Prepare, justify, and administer a complex budget.
● Supervise a team of professionals and conduct yearly performance assessments.
● Foster an inclusive workplace where diversity and individual differences are valued.
● Manage and resolve conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner, both within and outside the organization.

Non-Technical skills

The NAPPO ED must have:
● Excellent organizational skills.
● Excellent interpersonal skills (i.e., treat others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect).
● Excellent oral and written communication skills.
● Ability to adapt to a changing work environment.
● Excellent computer skills and the ability to work and lead virtual working groups.

Language requirements

The NAPPO ED must have oral and written fluency in English. Oral and written fluency in Spanish is highly desirable but not required.

Benefits

● The base salary for this position is based on the U.S. Federal Government General Schedule 15 (GS-15) annual salary (https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2023/general-schedule) plus a 10% retirement benefit deposited into the (401k) retirement plan of each NAPPO employee.
● Health insurance coverage will be provided and may take the form of a Health Savings Account.
● The successful candidate is entitled to accrue annual leave and sick leave each pay period (26 pay periods/y). The amount of accrued annual leave can be adjusted upward in subsequent employment contracts.
● The successful candidate will be eligible to receive:
  ○ additional social benefits (e.g., maternity, or paternity leave)
  ○ relocation expenses, as negotiated with the NAPPO EC.

How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit:
● a resume or Curriculum Vitae (not to exceed five pages)
● a one-page cover letter
● a narrative statement addressing the following elements (not to exceed one page per element):
  ○ What makes you qualified to interact on international plant health issues?
  ○ What makes you qualified to run an organization such as NAPPO?
  ○ What makes you qualified to manage diverging viewpoints and conflicts?
If selected for an interview, the candidate will be required to provide a list of three references that can directly address the candidate’s experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities. Applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Applications for this position should be sent to Stephanie Dubon (stephanie.m.dubon@usda.gov) and Angela Chandler (angela.chandler@usda.gov). An acknowledgement will be sent upon receipt of your application.

Application deadline: **17 September 2023**

Additional information is available in the complete **Position Description**.

Specific questions about the position can be addressed by contacting the NAPPO Advisory Management Committee (AMC) members representing the NPPOs of NAPPO member countries:

- **CANADA** - Tanya Staffen (tanya.staffen@inspection.gc.ca)
- **UNITED STATES** - Stephanie Dubon (stephanie.m.dubon@usda.gov)
- **MEXICO** - Ana Lilia Montealegre (ana.montealegre@senasica.gob.mx)
North American Plant Protection Organization Executive Director Position Description

The North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) is directed by an Executive Committee (EC) composed of the Chief Plant Protection Officers of Canada, the United States and Mexico or their designated representative(s). The NAPPO Executive Director (ED) manages the human and financial resources of the NAPPO secretariat and plays a leadership role in facilitating and supporting EC planning and decision-making.

The ED is responsible for leading and managing the organization for the purpose of implementing the EC-approved annual Work Program and ensuring that work carried out under the auspices of NAPPO is in accordance with the NAPPO Strategic Plan (NAPPO SP), and associated budget, as appropriate. The ED does not represent any of the NPPOs of its member countries but works on behalf of the EC and the three NPPOs to meet the goals of the NAPPO SP and execute the approved yearly Work Program.

The provisions in Article IX of the new revised text of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC, 1997) provides for contracting parties to establish regional plant protection organizations (RPPOs). NAPPO is the RPPO for North America. NAPPO provides a forum for public and private sectors in Canada, the United States and Mexico to collaborate in the regional protection of agricultural, forest, other plant resources, and the environment while facilitating safe trade. Plant protection and trade facilitation are achieved through the development and implementation of science-based regional plant health standards, documents and related plant protection activities directed towards preventing the introduction and spread of regulated plant pests. Development and harmonization of North American regional strategies has proven beneficial in strengthening plant protection in the continent and allowing for the safe expansion of trade among its member countries.

NAPPO collaborates and engages with RPPOs representing other geographical regions to exchange phytosanitary information and support the implementation of the IPPC Strategic Framework (2020-2030).

Performance Elements and Standards for the NAPPO ED

1. Advances the EC-approved annual Work Program (WP)
   - Demonstrates actions taken to actively support, advance and achieve the annual WP objectives.
   - Prepares an annual report on how the WP meets the goals of the NAPPO SP.
   - As appropriate, co-organizes or collaborates with member countries in organizing the NAPPO Annual Meeting.

2. Supports the EC
   - Routinely and constructively communicates with and engages the EC on emerging issues, decisions or actions that require EC guidance, awareness, or approval, including attendance to international meetings, key communications to external stakeholders, and other issues that have policy or budgetary considerations.
   - Uses judgement to determine when communications should be elevated to the EC, when issues are within the ED’s own level of authority, and when subject matter expertise on specific issues should be sought.
• Keeps the EC informed on WP progress and on forward-looking events for planning and coordination purposes (e.g., upcoming meetings, travel, etc.).
• Prepares an annual calendar of travel and external meetings to share with and gain approval from the EC. This may be followed by a short debrief of the meeting outcomes at the appropriate EC meeting.
• Oversees the preparation of all documents that inform NAPPO governance meetings.

3. **Efficiently and transparently manages the NAPPO secretariat’s human and financial resources**
• Ensures that secretariat activities are always linked to and supportive of the EC-approved annual WP and NAPPO SP.
• Develops, tracks, and reports on the annual budget and other operating documents needed to support the annual WP and ensure full financial accountability.
• Manages the stewardship of funds destined for intra-regional cooperation on transboundary pest programs, as appropriate.
• Constructively manages and resolves conflicts that may emerge in the NAPPO secretariat.
• Creates a culture that fosters a high standard of performance, ethics, and respect by facilitating open communication, allowing everyone to express their viewpoints, and assuring confidentiality is always maintained.
• Secures and safeguards NAPPO purchased equipment and goods which can be lost, stolen, or used for unauthorized purposes through the appropriate property management and control mechanisms.

4. **Chairs and supports the NAPPO Advisory and Management Committee (AMC)**
• Works closely with the AMC, composed of representatives from the NPPOs of the three member countries and the NAPPO Technical Director (TD), to ensure ongoing coordination and collaboration, timely and efficient planning, and transparent and frequent regional communication.
• Facilitates cooperation and consensus to accomplish NAPPO SP goals and deliverables.
• As appropriate, manages and resolves conflicts in a constructive manner.
• Oversees the preparation of all documents that inform NAPPO governance meetings.

5. **In collaboration with the NAPPO TD directs and supports the projects undertaken by NAPPO Expert Groups (EGs)**
• As appropriate, provides guidance, expertise, direction, and support to projects under development.
• Monitors EG progress and strives for projects to meet the agreed-upon timelines for delivery, reporting deviances to the EC and AMC, and taking corrective actions, as appropriate.
• Constructively manages and resolves conflicts that may emerge with or within EGs.

6. **Represents NAPPO to external stakeholders**
• Communicates with the NAPPO Industry Advisory Group (IAG) and industry stakeholders regarding the annual WP and NAPPO SP issues and priorities.
• Presents NAPPO’s agreed-upon positions in various established stakeholder fora, particularly regarding activities related to the annual WP and goals of the NAPPO SP.
• Enhances NAPPO’s reputation and credibility with international, industry, and other external stakeholders.

7. **Discretion and Professionalism**
• Is aware of and sensitive to internal and external factors that may impact the work of NAPPO.
• Supports the NAPPO mission and safeguards NAPPO’s credibility in interactions and written correspondence with all stakeholders.
• Interacts with and treats the EC, AMC, IAG, EG members, secretariat staff and stakeholders in a constructive, respectful, and professional fashion.
• Always presents views and opinions to the EC, AMC, IAG, EG members, secretariat staff and stakeholders in a neutral and objective manner.

Knowledge Required by the Position
• Knowledge of and ability to apply leadership concepts such as accountability, conflict management, human and financial management, and leveraging diversity to manage the secretariat’s staff and hold self and others accountable for measurable, high-quality, timely, and cost-effective deliverables.
• In-depth understanding of the field of plant protection.
• Knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of a national plant protection organization (NPPO) including policies, regulations and procedures required for a phytosanitary program.
• Working Knowledge of the international plant health framework including:
  o the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and its standard setting and implementation activities
  o the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement)
  o the RPOs, their origins, functions, and roles
  o knowledge or practical experience with NAPPO or with another RPPO.
• Knowledge of international and regional plant health standards and their implementation.
• Knowledge of other relevant agreements such as:
  o the new North American Free Trade Agreement (CUSMA – Canada, United States, and Mexico Agreement; USMCA – United States, Mexico, and Canada Agreement; T-MEC – Tratado entre Mexico, Estados Unidos y Canada) and its relationship with NAPPO
  o the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).
• Knowledge of project management principles for the development, monitoring, and adjustment of work plans.
• Fluency (orally and in writing) in English. Oral and written fluency in Spanish is highly desirable but not required.
• Ability to lead and work with virtual working groups.
• Excellent computer skills.

Position Oversight
The ED receives direction from the NAPPO EC in the form of oversight, performance evaluations, and guidance on policies to achieve the objectives and goals of the organization. The ED meets face-to-face with the EC on a predetermined schedule, normally three times annually. The NAPPO EC reviews the ED’s performance annually.

Travel requirements
Due to the provisions of the IPPC and the nature of NAPPO’s mission, the position of ED requires frequent domestic and international travel which is aligned with the NAPPO annual Work Plan and strategic priorities for North America.