



National Plant Protection Award Goes To Wisconsin Nursery Inspector

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MADISON— Konnie Jerabek, a plant pest and disease specialist with the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, has received the 2016 Carl E. Carlson Distinguished Achievement Award in Regulatory Plant Protection from the National Plant Board.

The national award recognizes and honors individuals who have distinguished themselves in the area of regulatory plant protection through service and contributions made at the field level. She will receive her award at the NPB annual awards banquet in Wilmington, Del. on Aug. 2.

"We're pleased that those at the national level have recognized Konnie as an excellent ambassador to the nursery and Christmas tree industries, as well as being an excellent nursery inspector," said Ben Brancel, Secretary of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. "She's a lifelong learner and never turns down an opportunity to expand her skills and enthusiastically tackle a new area."

A field inspector with 18 years of experience, Jerabek is known in the industry for her broad knowledge of horticulture and willingness to help growers solve problems. Her expertise in Christmas trees is particularly valuable.

"Every day's like a field trip," said Jerabek. "I can't believe I landed a job that pays me to look at plants and help the people who grow them."

In addition to inspecting a wide variety of plant products, Jerabek also assists with the gypsy moth and emerald ash borer programs. Highlights of her contributions include:

- Provided input to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources on the creation of Wisconsin's invasive species rule, and enforcing this rule at nurseries.
- Speaks annually to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls nursery management class, and helping evaluate the arboriculture curriculum there.
- Has been an active member of the Horticulture Inspection Society since 1997.

Jerabek was selected from a pool of highly qualified candidates from across the country. She was previously selected by her peers as the 2016 recipient of the Robert McAdams Award, recognizing superior achievement of professional development in horticulture inspection. A Wisconsin native, she received her horticulture degree from UW-River Falls. Jerabek began at Wisconsin DATCP in 1997 as a seasonal inspector. In 2002, she became a full-time plant pest and disease specialist. Jerabek currently resides in northwestern Wisconsin with her husband, Scott.

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