BRAZILIAN QUARANTINE OF BIOLOGICAL CONTROL AGENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO MERCOSUR

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The interest in the use of classical biological control techniques has grown worldwide as a search of options for the use of chemical control, especially due to the adverse effects of chemicals on the environment and human health, as well as to the low application costs and the need to comply with certification protocols regulations. Therefore, the new international focus given to agriculture production has come hand in hand with the use of alternative and less environmentally aggressive means, aiming at favoring the sustainable use of the agro ecosystems. The current area treated with biological agents in Brazil is 10 million hectares, in which soybean, sugar cane, coffee, vegetables and fruits are the main crops used as consumer goods. The segment stand for an annual revenue of US$ 164,9 million. The security in each introduction of biological control agent is of vital importance, both for Brazilian phytosanitary defense and for the promotion of a higher adoption of classical biological control as a safe way to promote the Integrated Pest Management. There are legal and normative aspects, which establish procedures to be adopted, not only to protect the bio prospection and native organisms, but also to minimize risks to the national genetic patrimony, associated with the introduction of exotic organisms. Therefore, Brazilian legal demands were developed to assure that every introduction, be that destined to research activity or trading purposes, must be officially performed by personnel or institutions licensed for specific activities in accordance with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (MAPA). The entrance of agroforestry pests in the country has been officially registered at the Laboratório de Quarentena "Costa Lima" (LQCL), of Embrapa Meio Ambiente, in Jaguariúna-SP. This laboratory, accredited since 1991 in Brazil, develops research in classical biological control of pests, regarding the introductions of exotic bioagents of control of these introduced pests. From 1991 to 2017, LQCL performed 784 introductions of beneficial organisms for several crops and purposes, meeting the demands and requests of 18 Brazilian states, along with the exportation of 31 beneficial organisms to 11 countries. The Laboratory "Costa Lima" has contributed to the classical biological control of several exotic forest

pests in Brazil since 2003, as part of the Cooperative Forest Protection Program of Instituto de Pesquisas e Estudos Florestais (PROTEF/IPEF) and associated to the Universidade Estadual Paulista (UNESP) and others Institutions. LQCL attends exploratory search, i.e, research aimed at the prospection of bioecological information of quarantine pests and of their potential bioagents of control, regarding preventive prospective study to the introduction of the main quarantine pests. These actions have great importance towards the national phytosanitary defense.