EPHYTO IMPLEMENTATION CASE STORY

QUESTIONNAIRE

Country	United States
NPPO	United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Contact Person	Christian Dellis
Designation	Deputy Director – Phytosanitary Issues Management – Export Services
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TYPE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Please indicate if you have implemented ePhyto through:
- Your own National System
  or
- The IPPC Generic ePhyto National System (GeNS)

National System – Phytosanitary Certificate Issuance & Tracking (PCIT)

Briefly describe your ePhyto implementation setup (maximum 150 words)

We are running our ePhyto implementation on Java platform with the following setup:
JDK 1.8, EJB, JAXB, EJB, JPA, Spring 5.0, Quartz Scheduler, Eclipselink, JSF, WebLogic 12.2.1.3.0, JDeveloper.

Please also indicate briefly (maximum 150 words) the main reasons for your choice of implementation model (i.e. GeNS or National System)

We use our National System model to incorporate the ePhyto implementation. It is because our infrastructure is built on the single-entry system to facilitate exchanging electronic information between regulatory agencies and trading participants in simpler, faster and more efficient way.

BASIC ePHYTO STATISTICS FOR YOUR COUNTRY

How many ePhytos do you transmit and receive per month through the IPPC ePhyto Hub (average over the past 3 months)?
Avg. of incoming certs = 14,450 Avg. of outgoing export certs exchanged = 22,000 Avg. of outgoing re-export certs exchanged = 590
What main countries are you exchanging ePhytos with via the IPPC ePhyto Hub?
APHIS is sending to: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Fiji, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Republic of, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Uganda. APHIS is receiving from: Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominica, Fiji, France, Ghana, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Kenya, Korea, Republic of, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Samoa, Sri Lanka and Uganda.
Are there new countries to and from which you are now trading as a result of implementing ePhyto?
Yes, all countries above apart from Australia, Argentina and the Netherlands.

PROJECT DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

How did you organise the implementation of ePhyto in your country? Was a project team or steering group established to guide the project?
Direct development with APHIS PCIT contractor
If yes, who participated in the team – what agencies and at what level (we do not need to know the specific names of the team members)?
USDA APHIS Phytosanitary Issues Management – Export Services
How were the key Stakeholders identified?
Current users of the PCIT system. Approximately, 40,000 nationwide.
What process did you have for consulting with these key stakeholders?
Quarterly regional meetings.
Were the stakeholders engaged in the design of the ePhyto service?
No, existing PCIT functionality used by stakeholders was updated to support ePhyto.
What process did you undertake to get buy-in from senior management in your NPPO?
PCIT has been in operation since 2006 and ePhyto since 2009 (bi-lateral). Hub was a natural outgrowth toward supporting exporters.
Did you do a Business Process Analysis (BPA) of the existing paper processes before designing and implementing the ePhyto service (including a cost comparison)?
No

If yes, did you use this to develop the new procedures?
N/A

Was any other research undertaken?
No

Was there a pilot project? If yes, please describe (e.g. what countries and or products were chosen)?
Yes, Australia, Argentina and the Netherlands. All commodities

How long did it take from the initial discussions on ePhyto in your country to the first exchange of Production ePhytos through the Hub?
8 years

Did implementing ePhyto take more or less time than you expected?
A greater time to implement bilateral ePhyto exchanges. Very little time with HUB/GeNS capable countries.

What was your biggest challenge to overcome in implementing ePhyto in your country?
Disparate use of the UNCEFACT/ePhyto schema fields and harmonization between bilateral ePhyto exchanges.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Was there resistance from any specific sectors or agencies in establishing the service? If so, how was this handled?
No

Was a specific Change Management programme implemented? If so, please describe.
No

What kind of training was provided for users?
None. ePhyto in PCIT is an automated process that does not need user interaction.

Do you provide any helpdesk or customer service?
Yes, existing helpdesk and customer service was available.

COMMUNICATIONS

How were the stakeholders kept informed about the ePhyto implementation progress?
Quarterly stakeholder meetings.

How did you promote ePhyto to the business community, other stakeholders?
US Regional co-operator, commodity sector, and RPPO meetings.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

How did you monitor and evaluate progress in implementing ePhyto and in achieving the project objectives? What Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) did you use?
- Processes are monitored daily to ensure proper operations. Exceptions are handled as received. In terms of KPI's, the overall program success with our export community is our driving factor.

BENEFITS OBTAINED

What are the main benefits generated by the introduction of ePhyto?
(1) For your NPPO
- Less paper processing; quicker resolution of port issues.
(2) For Companies
- Faster transmission of documents. Quicker closure of port issues.
(3) Others?
- N/A

What problems did it solve?
Reduction in Fraud, faster release of held shipments, greater shelf like for commodities at destination.

Is it possible to put a dollar value on the benefits achieved?
N/A

COSTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

How much did it cost to establish ePhyto in your country?
ePhyto is an off-shoot of the PCIT system and the costs to maintain and enhance are incorporated into the overall PCIT annual expenditure.

What were the main costs areas?
Developing the system-to-system handshake; security issues and managing the message makeup

What are the ongoing operational costs (annual)?
ePhyto is an off-shoot of the PCIT system and the costs to maintain and enhance are incorporated into the overall PCIT annual expenditure.

Do you charge for issuing a Phytosanitary Certificate? If yes, what is the charge per certificate?
Yes, there is a charge per Phyto (paper or ePhyto). The cost can vary per certificate and those costs are managed in the PCIT system.

Are there any additional user fees for ePhyto?
No

If yes, Do the revenues generated cover operational costs?
N/A

Are the revenues (if any) reinvested in the facility?
Yes

How will the facility/service be sustained over the coming years?
PCIT and associated sub-systems (ePhyto, etc.) have an annual maintenance cost including operations and development of new features.

FUNDING SOURCE(S)

How was the implementation of ePhyto funded?
Funding is part of the overall funding for PCIT which is estimated and requested annually.

Did you receive Donor Support? If so, please describe.
No

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Describe any capacity building or technical assistance you received, including the source:
(1)   to conceptualize and design your country's approach to ePhyto Once the plan to create a certificate program was made, request of proposal was issued as per government regulations. The winning contractor preforms the development with government oversite.
(2)   to actually implement ePhyto
Once the plan to create a certificate program was made, request of proposal was issued as per government regulations. The winning contractor preforms the development with government oversite.

LEGISLATION CHANGES REQUIRED

Were any specific legislation changes necessary?
No

If so, what was the process and how long did this take?
N/A

How is the privacy of information protected?
Privacy data is kept to a minimum. Access to PCIT requires a USDA authorization.

TECHNOLOGY

What were the additional hardware or software or Internet facilities required to introduce ePhyto in your NPPO?
We did not acquire any specific hardware or internet setup to incorporate the ePhytos implementation. We have own data centre to facilitate the infrastructure support. For the software we use the open source Java platform for development.

SUCCESS FACTORS AND LESSONS LEARNED

What are the main lessons learned from implementing this service?
-     Harmony with other countries. -   Electronic exchange drive to meet the paperless goal in the future. -   Simplify the solution to exchange the certificates in a secured way of communication. -   Integrating with regulatory agencies and trading participants in simpler, faster and more efficient way.
What were the crucial success factors?
-     Easy of use for our export community. Growing international acceptance of ePhyto and expansion to our trade partners.
What were the greatest obstacles?
Getting international agreements and sign-offs
What are the biggest obstacles to further development of the Facility/service?
N/A
Are you or other colleagues available to be resources to other countries implementing ePhyto?
Yes.

CONTACT DETAILS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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