



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

OFFICIAL NOTICE FOR THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES PLEASE READ IMMEDIATELY

NOTICE OF TREATMENT FOR THE MEXICAN FRUIT FLY

Between January 5 and January 12th, 2015, four Mexican fruit flies (Mexflies), *Anastrepha ludens* (Loew), were trapped in the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County. These detections indicate that a breeding population exists in the area. The infestation is sufficiently isolated and localized to be susceptible to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) Mexfly treatment work plan, which includes treatment with a combination of sterile insects, a foliar-applied insecticide, and host fruit removal.

A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) has been certified which analyzes the Mexfly treatment program in accordance with Public Resources Code, Sections 21000 et seq. The PEIR is available at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/peir/>. The treatment activities, described below, will be conducted consistent with the PEIR.

In accordance with integrated pest management principles, the CDFA has evaluated possible treatment methods and determined that there are no cultural or biological control methods available to eradicate the Mexfly from this area.

The treatment plan for the Mexfly infestation will be implemented as follows:

- The sterile insect technique (SIT) makes use of sterile Mexflies to prevent the production of viable offspring. The wild female Mexflies mate with the sterile males and lay infertile eggs, thereby disrupting the breeding cycle and causing the population to be eliminated. Sterile flies are released by aircraft within a nine-square-mile area around each detection site. Releases are repeated every three to four days for two life cycles of the fly (typically four to six months, dependent on temperature).
- Foliar bait treatments are used within 200 meters of each detection site in order to mitigate the spread of Mexfly by eliminating those adult life stages not directly affected by SIT (i.e., mated females and sexually immature flies). Foliar bait ground treatments are a protein bait spray that contains an organic formulation of the pesticide spinosad (GF-120 NF Naturalyte® Fruit Fly Bait), and are repeated every seven to 14 days for one life cycle of the fly (typically two to three months, dependent on temperature). More information is posted at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/videos/spinosad/>.
- If evidence that a breeding population exists on a property (i.e., immature stages, mated female, or multiple adults are detected), all host fruit from each detection site and all properties within a minimum of 100 meters of each detection site will be removed and disposed of in a landfill in accordance with regulatory protocols. Fruit removal will occur once at the beginning of the project, but may be repeated if additional flies are detected.

Public Notification:

Any resident whose property will be treated via foliar bait sprays or host fruit removal will be notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance of any treatment, in accordance with the

California Food and Agricultural Code Sections 5779 and 5401-5404. Following the treatment, completion notices are left with homeowners detailing precautions to take and post-harvest intervals applicable to any fruit on the property. For SIT applications, notification is given to the general public via mass media outlets such as newspapers or press releases. Treatment information is posted at http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/PDEP/treatment/mexfly_treatment.html. Press releases, if issued, are prepared by the CDFA information officer and the county agricultural commissioner, in close coordination with the project leader responsible for treatment. Either the county agricultural commissioner or the public information officer serves as the primary contact to the media.

For any questions related to this program, please contact the CDFA toll-free telephone number at 800-491-1899 for assistance. This telephone number is also listed on all treatment notices.

Attachments

FINDINGS REGARDING A TREATMENT PLAN FOR THE MEXICAN FRUIT FLY

Between January 5th and January 12th, 2015, four Mexican fruit flies (Mexflies), *Anastrepha ludens* (Loew), were trapped in the city of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County. These detections indicate that a breeding population exists in the area.

Mexfly is an exotic insect found throughout tropical and subtropical Mexico, from the Texas border through the Yucatan Peninsula, and occurs southward into Panama. Its distribution in the United States is restricted to the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, where it is under active eradication. Many crops in California would be threatened by the introduction of this pest including apple, apricot, avocado, grapefruit, lemon, lime, mandarin, nectarine, orange, peach, pear, plum, and pomegranate. Damage occurs when the female lays eggs in the fruit. These eggs hatch into larvae, which tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption.

This pest presents a major threat to a wide variety of California produce, with the combined 2012 gross value of these commodities being over \$3.6 billion. The permanent establishment and spread of this pest would result in increased production and post-harvest costs to safeguard commercial fruit from infestation, increased pesticide applications on both production agriculture and residential properties to mitigate damage, and lost economic activity and jobs from trade restrictions imposed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and foreign trade partners.

This decision to proceed with treatment is based upon a realistic evaluation that it may be possible to eradicate the Mexfly from this area and prevent its spread using currently available technology in a manner that is based on an action plan developed by the USDA, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and other scientists on the Mexfly Science Advisory Panel. In making this decision, the CDFA has evaluated possible treatment methods. In accordance with integrated pest management principles, the following is the list of options that I have considered for the treatment of this Mexfly infestation: 1) physical controls; 2) cultural controls; 3) biological controls; and 4) chemical controls.

Based upon input from my professional staff, including the Primary State Entomologist, and the input of experts familiar with Mexfly, I have concluded that there are no biological or cultural control methods that are effective to treat the Mexfly that allow the CDFA to meet its statutory obligations. To eradicate Mexfly in this area, I am ordering sterile insect release and ground applied foliar bait sprays. Releases of sterile flies will occur via aircraft, while foliar bait spray treatments consist of an organic formulation of spinosad applied to host trees using ground-based equipment. Additionally, in the event of evidence of a breeding population on a property, host fruit removal will occur. Descriptions of these options are below and are contained in the attached work plan. These options were selected based upon biological effectiveness, minimal public intrusiveness, cost, and minimal impacts to the environment.

A Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) has been prepared which analyzes the Mexfly treatment program in accordance with Public Resources Code (PRC), Sections 21000 et seq. The PEIR was certified in December 2014, and is available at <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/peir/>. The treatment activities, described below, will be conducted consistent with the PEIR.

Sensitive Areas

The treatment area has been reviewed by consulting the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's California Natural Diversity Database for threatened or endangered species. The CDFA also consults with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife when rare and endangered species are located within the treatment area. Mitigation measures will be implemented as needed. The CDFA will not apply pesticides to bodies of water or undeveloped areas of native vegetation. All treatment will be applied to residential properties, common areas within residential development, non-agricultural commercial properties, and right-of-ways.

Treatment Plan

The proposed program area encompasses those portions of Los Angeles County which fall within a nine-square mile area around each property on which Mexfly has been detected. A map of the project boundaries and the treatment work plan is attached. In summary form, the treatment plan consists of the following elements:

1. **Delimitation.** McPhail traps will be used to delimit the infestation and monitor post-treatment populations after sterile Mexfly releases have been completed. McPhail traps baited with *Torula* yeast are placed over a nine-square-mile area around each detection site (core and first buffer) at a density of 80 in the core square mile and 40 in the surrounding eight-square-mile buffer. Five McPhail traps are placed in each mile of the remaining delimitation area. Additional traps may be added to further delimit the infestation and to determine the efficacy of treatments. Once sterile releases have begun, trap density in the core and first buffer are reduced to five per square mile. Following the cessation of sterile release, McPhail trap density in the core and first buffer is increased to pre-treatment levels. All traps will be serviced on a regular schedule for a period equal to three Mexfly generations beyond the date of the last fly detected. In addition, host fruit will be sampled for the presence of eggs and larvae in a 200-meter radius around each detection property.
2. **Treatment.** Any Mexfly detections within the original and/or expanded eradication area(s) will be treated according to the following protocol:
 - The sterile insect technique (SIT) makes use of sterile male Mexflies to prevent the production of viable offspring. The female Mexflies mate with the sterile males and lay infertile eggs, thereby disrupting the breeding cycle and causing the population to be eradicated. Sterile flies are released by aircraft within a nine-square-mile area around each detection site. Releases are repeated every three to four days for two life cycles of the fly (typically four to six months, dependent on temperature).
 - Foliar bait treatments are used within 200 meters of each detection site in order to mitigate the spread of Mexfly by eliminating those adult life stages not directly affected by SIT (i.e., mated females and sexually immature flies). Foliar bait ground treatments are a protein bait spray that contains an organic formulation of the pesticide spinosad (GF-120 NF Naturalyte® Fruit Fly Bait), and are repeated

every seven to 14 days for one life cycle of the fly (typically two to three months, dependent on temperature).

- If evidence that a breeding population exists on a property (i.e., immature stages, mated female, or multiple adults are detected), all host fruit from each detection site and all properties within a minimum of 100 meters of each detection site will be removed and disposed of in a landfill in accordance with regulatory protocols. Treatment will occur once at the beginning of the project, but may be repeated if additional flies are detected.

Public Information

Any resident whose property will be treated via foliar bait sprays or host fruit removal will be notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance of any treatment, in accordance with the California Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) Sections 5779 and 5401-5404. Following the treatment, completion notices are left with homeowners detailing precautions to take and post-harvest intervals applicable to any fruit on the property. For SIT applications, notification is given to the general public via mass media outlets such as newspapers or press releases. Treatment information is posted at http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/PDEP/treatment/mexfly_treatment.html. Press releases, if issued, are prepared by the CDFA information officer and the county agricultural commissioner, in close coordination with the project leader responsible for treatment. Either the county agricultural commissioner or the public information officer serves as the primary contact to the media.

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Duty to Act

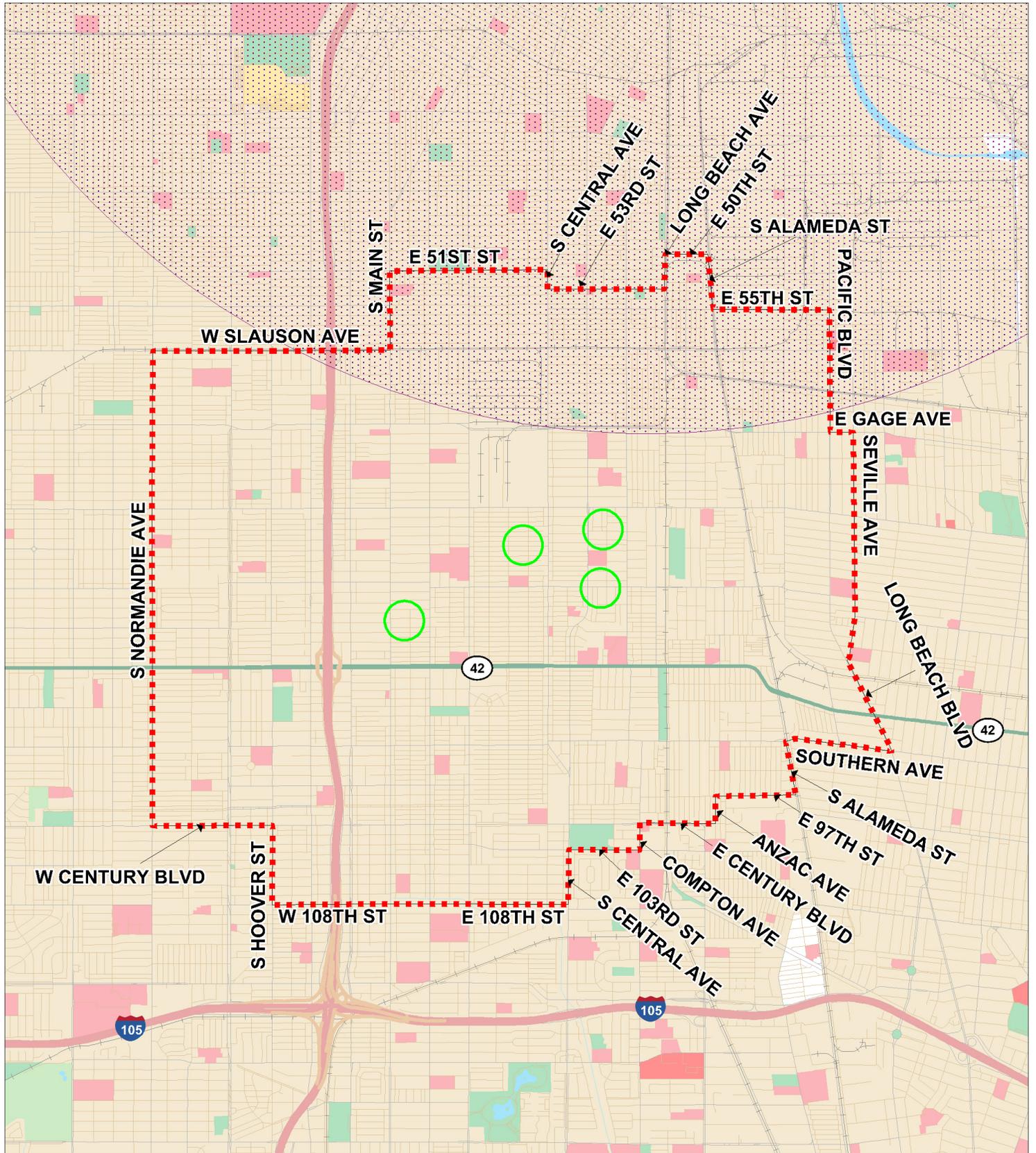
Under my statutory authority, as Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, I have decided, based upon the likely environmental and economic damage that would be inflicted by an established infestation of the Mexfly in this area, that it is incumbent upon me to address this threat.

My duty to act, and this decision, is based upon authority set forth in Sections 24.5, 401.5, 403, 407, 408, 5401-5405, and 5761-5764 of the FAC, authorizing and mandating the Secretary to: thoroughly investigate the existence of the pest; determine the probability of the pest spreading to other areas; adopt regulations (Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3588) as are reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this code; abate a pest from the established treatment area; and, to prevent further economic damage. The enclosed project work plan describes the CDFA's actions that are necessary to mitigate the effects of this pest.

Karen Ross, Secretary

Date

**MEXICAN FRUIT FLY
LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES COUNTY
2015**



**MAXIMUM PROGRAM
BOUNDARY**



200M TREATMENT AREA



**SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
AREA / TREATMENT
MITIGATIONS IN PLACE**