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# California on High Alert for Spotted Lanternfly

While no infestations of the invasive spotted lanternfly have been found in the state during the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s recent annual survey of over 600 sites, dead spotted lanternflies have been found during several routine agricultural inspections.

These finds emphasize the importance of the state’s proactive approach to keeping the pest out of California and preparing for its possible arrival. The CDFA is focusing its efforts on detection, exclusion, research, and outreach, and has an action plan in place in case a spotted lanternfly infestation is found in the state.



The destructive spotted lanternfly is a threat to many important commercial crops and affects people’s enjoyment of the outdoors. The insect is harmless to humans and animals, but feeds on a wide range of plants and trees, with damage seen in vineyards, nurseries, and urban, suburban, and rural environments. The pest spreading to California would be problematic for the wine industry since it feeds on grapevines, ultimately reducing yield, diminishing quality, and potentially killing the vines, and can be expensive to treat.

The public can play a critical role in keeping an eye out for the distinctive-looking insect. To learn more about the pest and to see pictures of what it looks like in its various life stages, visit: [cdfa.ca.gov/pdcp/slf](http://cdfa.ca.gov/pdcp/slf).

**SPOT THE SPOTTED LANTERNFLY?**  
CDFA Pest Hotline: 1-800-491-1899  
Report online: [cdfa.ca.gov/plant/reportapest/](http://cdfa.ca.gov/plant/reportapest/)  
Learn more: [cdfa.ca.gov/pdcp/slf](http://cdfa.ca.gov/pdcp/slf)

Snag it. Snap it. Report it.



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The spotted lanternfly may spread by clinging to or laying egg masses on portable surfaces, such as cars, trucks, trailers, train cars, and other outdoor items. It was first found in Pennsylvania in 2014 and is spreading across the Northeast, mid-Atlantic and Midwest. To see a current map of finds and infestations, visit [stopslf.org](https://stopslf.org).

While no established populations have been found in California during CDFA's annual surveys over the past three years, there have been several finds of dead spotted lanternflies during routine air cargo, parcel facility, and border station inspections. This summer, personnel at CDFA's Border Inspection Station at Truckee found spotted lanternfly egg masses on a trailer carrying firewood from New Jersey and destroyed the firewood.



Inspectors at CDFA's Border Inspection Station at Truckee found spotted lanternfly egg masses on a trailer carrying firewood.

Since 2020, state and county surveyors have searched over 1,000 sites across the state. During this year's survey, over 600 target sites across 50 counties were searched between August and October. Fairgrounds and highway rest areas were new survey sites this year.

Some of the other proactive prevention measures CDFA is leading include:

- Developed an action plan addressing detection, delimitation, treatment and quarantine.
- Enforcing a statewide exterior quarantine that restricts the movement of host plants and a variety of articles (vehicles, outdoor furniture, moving containers) that could carry spotted lanternflies or egg masses from infested areas.
- Conducting and funding scientific research, including host specificity testing, biological control, and developing risk-based maps and models.
- Providing training to county agricultural staff and developing a training module for UC Master Gardeners to be released later this year.
- Increasing public awareness, including the creation of a communications toolkit by the Pierce's Disease and Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Board. The tools, in English and Spanish, are available for download at [bit.ly/SLF\\_tools](https://bit.ly/SLF_tools). You can request printed material by contacting the Pierce's Disease Control Program at [pdcpinfo@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:pdcpinfo@cdfa.ca.gov) or (916) 900-5024.

## Pierce's Disease Control Program Statewide Coordinator Retires

Craig Hanes, statewide coordinator for the Pierce's Disease Control Program, retired in August after working with the California Department of Food and Agriculture for 29 years. Hanes began his career with CDFA as a trapper in Orange County for the Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services Division before joining PDCP 22 years ago.

"Craig is a delightful person to work with and has a heart as big as can be. We really appreciate everything he has done for the Pierce's Disease Control Program," said CDFA Secretary Karen Ross.

"It has been an honor to be the PDCP Statewide Coordinator the past two years," said Hanes. "Our team at CDFA has been, and continues to be, an exceptional group so rest assured the work of the PDCP, PD/GWSS Board, and PD Advisory Task Force is in good hands."



Craig Hanes with Secretary Ross.



Propagating clean plant material.  
Photo: Foundation Plant Services.

### Propagating the Premier US Grape Collection for Protection in a Foundation Greenhouse

**Project leader: Maher Al Rwahnih, University of California, Davis**

To support the industry's need for clean plant material, the Pierce's Disease and Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Board is contributing to Foundation Plant Services' work to collect, propagate, test, and clean up industry-identified priority grapevine selections for protection in a new greenhouse. The team is collecting and testing dormant material, propagating cuttings, and re-registering plants after retesting to confirm trueness-to-type. The new greenhouse, expected to be ready by December 2023, will protect 2,000 vines from red blotch disease and other pathogens. Learn more at [bit.ly/3KapUgo](https://bit.ly/3KapUgo).

### Identification of Novel Central Valley *Trichoderma* Isolates for Biological Control of Pierce's Disease in California

**Project leader: Christopher Wallis, United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service**

This project is expected to identify valuable microorganisms that can potentially be used to produce low-cost, easy-to-use, effective biocontrol products that grape growers can use to combat Pierce's disease. *Trichoderma* species are some of the best-known biological controls of plant disease. The team will screen a collection of *Trichoderma* isolates for ones that effectively reduce the incidence and/or severity of PD in grapevines and obtain full-length genomic sequences of these isolates.



Grape leaf showing symptoms of Pierce's disease.



Recording symptoms of grapevine red blotch. Photo: Anita Oberholster.

### Investigating the Relationship Between Grapevine Red Blotch Virus Titer Levels, Years of Infection and Symptomatology

**Project leader: Anita Oberholster, University of California, Davis**

Grapevine red blotch virus (GRBV) causes a delay in grape ripening, leading to significant decreases in sugar accumulation, anthocyanin biosynthesis, and aroma compound accumulation. The virus can affect the production of compounds that are important contributors to the color, flavor, and mouthfeel of wines. It also alters pectin and soluble proteins in the skin cell walls which could result in binding reactions to phenolic compounds such as tannin. The latter are important flavor and mouthfeel contributors. The team is now studying the potential interaction between virus levels and grapevine symptomatology and whether the duration of infection has any impact on this relationship.

# Winegrape Assessment Rate Set at \$1.25 per \$1,000 of Value for the 2022 Harvest

“As the Pierce’s Disease and Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Board discussed the assessment rate, we were mindful of the cost pressures our industry is facing and carefully constructed the upcoming budget to best balance our assessment dollars for maximum impact,” said Will Drayton, Board chair. “We know California winegrape growers continue to face pressure from grapevine viruses, so we want to ensure growers have clean plant material and that the Board continues to wisely invest grower dollars in the best research for solutions to pests and diseases.”

The annual rate was set at \$1.00 for the past three years and has averaged \$1.35 per \$1,000 of value since it was established in 2001. The 2022 assessment is expected to bring in an estimated \$3.5 million in funding.

The consistent funding made possible by the winegrape grower assessment means that California’s wine industry supports leading scientists dedicated to finding solutions to PD and other serious pests and diseases of winegrapes. The Board has guided the investment of \$52.5 million in research since 2001. Learn more about the Board’s research and outreach activities and projects funded this year at [bit.ly/3w27mtc](https://bit.ly/3w27mtc).

# New Members Join Pierce’s Disease Advisory Task Force

The Pierce’s Disease Advisory Task Force is composed of county agricultural commissioners, scientists, agricultural representatives, and other experts. The Task Force reviews program progress and advises the Pierce’s Disease and Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter Board and the Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

New members:

- Chris Bowland, Williams Selyem Winery
- Dr. Kristin Lowe, Vine Balance Consulting and PD/GWSS Board Research Coordinator
- Todd Sanders, Consolidated Central Valley Table Grape Pest & Disease Control District

For the full membership list, visit: [bit.ly/3U2vYS4](https://bit.ly/3U2vYS4).