

PROCLAMATION OF AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM  
REGARDING THE ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID

On July 28, 2011, a population of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), *Diaphoria citri* Kuwayama, was detected in the City of Norco, Riverside County. Based on the survey data, ACP having a continuous life cycle, information from California's Huanglongbing Taskforce, recommendations provided to me by the Department's Primary State Entomologist and Primary State Plant Pathologist, and experience gained from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) control efforts in the southeastern United States, I have determined that an infestation of ACP exists.

The ACP is an exotic insect that is originally from Asia. It has been introduced into Central and South America, the Caribbean and Mexico. In the United States, ACP has been found in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas and California (San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties). ACP feeds on members of the plant family Rutaceae, primarily on *Citrus* and *Murraya* species, but is also known to attack several other genera. The most serious damage caused by ACP is due to its vectoring the phloem-inhabiting bacterium *Candidatus liberibacter* the causal agent of huanglongbing (HLB). HLB is considered one of the most devastating diseases of citrus in the world. Symptoms of HLB include yellow shoots with mottling and chlorosis of the leaves, misshapen fruit, fruit that does not fully color, and fruit that has a very bitter taste making it unusable for human consumption. The psyllids cause injury to their host plants via the withdrawal of large amounts of sap as they feed and via the production of large amounts of honeydew which coats the leaves of the tree and encourages the growth of sooty mold, which blocks sunlight from reaching the leaves.

As Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), I have decided, based upon the likely environmental and economic damage that would be inflicted by this infestation of ACP, that under my statutory authority, it is incumbent on me to address this threat. This pest presents a major threat to citrus grown within the State. California is the top citrus-producing state in the U.S., with total production valued at over \$1.8 billion. Additionally, the establishment of ACP in California would increase the need for pesticide use by commercial and residential citrus producers, as well as require enforcement of quarantine restrictions. In a recent study in Florida, the presence of HLB increased citrus production costs by 40 percent (Irey, 2008). Because HLB has been detected in Mexico, the establishment of ACP in California will pave the way for HLB to spread. HLB would have severe consequences to both the citrus industry and to the urban landscape via the decline and the death of citrus trees.

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 Food and Agricultural Code authorizing and mandating the Secretary to: thoroughly investigate the existence; to determine the probability of the spread of a pest; to adopt regulations (Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3591.21) as are reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this code; to abate the pest from the established eradication area; and, to prevent further economic damage. The enclosed project plan describes the CDFA's actions that are necessary to mitigate the spread of this pest.

This decision to proceed with a treatment program is based upon a realistic evaluation that it may be possible to address the threat posed by ACP using currently available technology in a manner that is recommended by California's HLB Task Force. Treatment needs and environmental conditions are outlined in the attached work plan. In making this decision, CDFA has evaluated possible eradication methods. In accordance with integrated pest management principles, the following is a list of the options that I have considered for the eradication of this ACP infestation: 1) mechanical controls; 2) biological controls; 3) mass trapping; 4) cultural controls; and 5) foliar application of pesticides by ground equipment.

Based upon input from my professional staff, including memorandums from the Primary State Entomologist and Primary State Plant Pathologist, and the input of experts familiar with ACP, I have concluded that there are no mechanical, biological, or cultural controls that are effective to eradicate ACP that allow CDFA to meet its statutory obligations. To eradicate ACP from this area, I am ordering ground applications of pesticides be made to all ACP hosts within an 800-meter radius around the detection sites. A description of the alternative to insecticides considered, and methodologies chosen, is contained in the attached work plan.

#### Sensitive Areas

The treatment area has been reviewed by consulting the Department of Fish and Game's California Natural Diversity Database for threatened or endangered species. Mitigation measures will be implemented as needed. CDFA also consults with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service when rare and endangered species are located within the treatment area. 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 and other non-commercial properties.

#### Treatment Plan

The proposed project area encompasses those portions of Riverside County which fall within an approximate nine square mile area around each property in which ACP has been detected. A map of the detection sites with the project boundaries and the proposed treatment work plan is attached. In summary form, the treatment plan consists of the following elements:

1. Delimitation. Yellow panel traps will be placed throughout the project area to delimit the infestation and to monitor post-treatment ACP populations. Yellow panel traps are placed at a density of 100 traps in the core square mile and 50 traps per square mile in the surrounding eight square miles. Additional traps may be added to further delimit the infestation and to determine the efficacy of treatments. These traps will be serviced on a regular schedule for a period equal to three ACP generations beyond the date of the last ACP detection.
2. Visual survey. All host plants will be inspected at all locations where traps are

placed. Host plants will be surveyed in a 10-mile radius around the detection site(s). Up to 100 properties per square mile may be inspected.

3. Treatment. Properties within the treatment area will be treated according to the following protocol: 1) Tempo® SC Ultra (cyfluthrin), a contact insecticide for controlling the adults and nymphs of ACP, will be applied to the foliage of host plants; 2) Merit® 2F, an imidacloprid insecticide, will be applied to soil beneath the drip line of host plants to eradicate developing nymphs.

Treatments will be repeated as per label instructions, for up to two life cycles beyond the last ACP detected (as determined by a life cycle model driven by accumulated day degrees). Both insecticides are applied by ground using hydraulic spray equipment.

### Public Information

Residents of affected properties are invited to a public meeting where officials from CDFA, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office are present to address resident's questions and concerns. Residents are notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance of any treatment in accordance with FAC 5779. After treatment, completion notices are left with the residents detailing precautions to take and post-harvest intervals applicable to the citrus fruit.

Public information concerning the ACP project will consist of press releases to the public and direct notification of project developments to concerned local and state political representatives and authorities. Press releases are prepared by the CDFA's 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.

If you have any questions related to this program, please contact the CDFA Toll-Free Hotline at 1 (800) 491-1899.