

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2008-24
June 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Confirmation of Citrus Greening (CG) in Louisiana

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On June 12, 2008, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Plant (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory and the PPQ Center for Plant Health Science and Technology (CPHST) National Plant Germplasm and Biotechnology Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, confirmed the identification of citrus greening (CG, also known as Huanglongbing or HLB) in a leaf sample from a residential property in Algiers, Orleans Parish, Louisiana. HLB is caused by the bacterial pathogen *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*. The samples in which CG was confirmed were from a lime tree on which Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) had previously been found. This is the first confirmation of CG in Louisiana.

The presence of the psyllids was first brought to the attention of the Louisiana State University AgCenter through the submission of a digital photograph taken by a homeowner. On a follow-up visit to the property, APHIS and Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry (LDAF) inspectors obtained both adult and nymph ACP's; these were confirmed as ACP on May 29, 2008. The lime tree on which the psyllids were collected had been on the property for 7 years, first as a potted plant and then planted in the ground approximately 3 years ago. APHIS is currently obtaining information concerning the source of the tree.

As a result of the initial detection of ACP, delimiting and detection surveys are being conducted at residential properties, commercial groves, and nurseries (both retail and production) in Orleans Parish and other south Louisiana parishes. To date, ACP has been confirmed at a total of 4 retail nurseries and 34 residential properties in Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Charles Parishes. In addition, 3 adult psyllids were collected from a single plant at a retail outlet in Lafourche Parish. Intensive surveys at properties in the vicinity of the retail outlet found no psyllid infestations. ACP has not yet been confirmed in any commercial citrus groves or production nurseries.

Emergency action notifications (EAN) have been issued to all of the nurseries in which ACP has been found to prevent the movement of infested plants. In addition, all insects confirmed as ACP, as well as leaf samples from plants on which the psyllids are found, are being tested for the presence of CG.

With the confirmation of CG in Orleans Parish, APHIS is working with LDAF to take appropriate regulatory action to prevent the movement of host plants and plant material from the Parish. LDAF officials have indicated that the State intends to take action to

PAGE TWO

establish a parallel quarantine, thus requiring APHIS to quarantine only those parishes in which ACP or CG is present. APHIS will continue to work closely with officials from the LDAF to delimit the presence of both ACP and CG while developing a response plan to address the infestations in Louisiana.

For additional information about this quarantine, you may contact Patrick Gomes, National Coordinator, Citrus Health Response Program, at Area Code (919) 855-7313.

/s/ Paul R. Eggert /for

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