

## Citrus Plant Recall



*Citrus canker causes lesions on citrus leaves, stems, and fruit.*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has confirmed the presence of citrus canker disease in a nursery in South Carolina that sold plants to online consumers. Together with State partners, APHIS is tracing the plants that were sold to 11 States and collecting and destroying them. The 11 States include Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

If you bought citrus plants online from South Carolina between August 5, 2021, and February 17, 2022, APHIS and State officials will contact you to collect and properly dispose of them. Our goal is to prevent citrus canker disease outbreaks, protect the U.S. citrus industry, and safeguard the citrus trees in your State.

### **What is citrus canker?**

Citrus canker disease affects all types of citrus plants. It causes citrus leaves and fruit to drop prematurely, and produces lesions on citrus leaves, stems, and fruit. The disease is not harmful to people or animals. Infected

fruit is safe to eat but may not be marketable because of the lesions.

### **How does citrus canker spread?**

The disease spreads to citrus plants through contaminated soil, containers, equipment and tools, infected plants and plant clippings, and untreated infected fruit. Wind and rain can also spread the disease between citrus plants. Citrus canker disease only occurs in citrus plants.

### **Where is citrus canker in the United States?**

Currently, citrus canker is found throughout Florida and in limited areas of Louisiana and Texas. APHIS and State partners have put in place Federal and State quarantines to contain the disease. APHIS recently confirmed the disease in Alabama and is working with State partners to establish a Federal quarantine to parallel the State quarantine.

### **Why is citrus canker a threat to our country's citrus supply?**

Citrus canker can spread quickly on citrus plants. The disease has the potential to harm the U.S. citrus industry, since damaged fruit cannot be sold.

## **What types of citrus plants are being collected and destroyed?**

APHIS and State partners are collecting and destroying all citrus plants sold online from the South Carolina nursery to consumers in 11 States between August 5, 2021, and February 17, 2022. This includes citron, clementine, grapefruit, kumquat, lemon, lime, limequat, mandarin, orange, satsuma, and tangelo plants.

## **How do you know my plants are infected?**

Citrus canker was found in samples of Meyer lemon and Key lime from the South Carolina nursery that sold the plants. Because the disease spreads quickly, it is likely your plants are infected, too.

## **What authority do you have to take my plants?**

Under the Plant Protection Act, APHIS is authorized to hold, seize, quarantine, treat, or apply other measures to destroy or otherwise dispose of plants or plant products that are infested or infected with a plant pest or were moved in violation of the Act or regulations established under the Act. To view APHIS' citrus canker regulations in the *Code of Federal Regulations*, go to [ecfr.gov](http://ecfr.gov) and search "301.75-6."

## **Why do you need to destroy the plants?**

The only way to stop the disease from spreading is to destroy infected plants and the soil used for planting. If your plant is in a container, you may keep the container if you disinfect it. To disinfect a container, use a freshly mixed solution made with 1 ounce of household chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of water and apply it to all surfaces of the container until the solution runs off the container.

## **Will I receive replacement plants?**

Yes. The company you purchased your plants from will replace your citrus tree free of charge. They are working with growers to select replacement plants and will ship your replacement plants in the coming weeks. The company is contacting customers through phone numbers and email addresses provided when the plants were purchased. You may also contact your State Plant Health Director for more information ([www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/sphd](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/sphd)).

## **For More Information**

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To learn more about APHIS' citrus canker regulations, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/citrus-canker](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/citrus-canker).