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# Availability of Final Environmental Assessment for a Biological Control Agent of Spotted-Wing Drosophila

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## Contacts:

[APHISPress@usda.gov](mailto:APHISPress@usda.gov)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has prepared a final environmental assessment (EA) that addresses the environmental impacts of releasing the insect *Ganaspis brasiliensis* to manage spotted-wing drosophila (*Drosophila suzukii*) populations in the contiguous United States. After careful analysis, APHIS has determined that releasing this biological control agent in the continental U.S. is not likely to harm the environment.

The spotted-wing drosophila is native to East Asia. It was first detected in California, Italy, and Spain in 2008. It has since established in most fruit-growing regions in North America. The invasive pest lays eggs inside ripening fruits, which then develop into larvae. The larvae feed on the fruit and puncture the skin. Punctures in the fruit's skin create pathways for secondary bacterial and fungal infections.

Releasing *G. brasiliensis* will reduce spotted-wing drosophila populations in the U.S. This small wasp poses no risk to humans, livestock, or wildlife. It only feeds on the invasive spotted-wing drosophila and related nonnative species. Biological control is a useful management strategy for an invasive pest whenever effective natural

enemies are not present in an invasive insect's new environment.

APHIS has reviewed and considered all public input submitted during the draft EA comment period and used the feedback reach a "Finding of No Significant Impact" and to complete the final EA. This finding allowed APHIS to approve permits for the initial release of *G. brasiliensis* into the environment to manage the spotted-wing drosophila. APHIS will continue to issue permits for the release of *G. brasiliensis* into the contiguous United States for the biological control of the spotted-wing drosophila as needed. Members of the public can review the final EA by visiting [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and entering APHIS-2021-0021 in the Search field.

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