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APHIS Establishes and Expands Mexican Fruit Fly (*Anastrepha ludens*) Quarantine Areas in Texas

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FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

DA-2024-11

April 24, 2024

To: State, Territory, and Tribal Agricultural Regulatory Officials

On March 26, 2024, the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) established a Mexican fruit fly (*Anastrepha ludens*; Mexfly) quarantine centered in Harlingen, Cameron County. On April 3, APHIS and TDA established a Mexfly quarantine in La Rosita, Starr County, expanded a Mexfly quarantine centered on Sebastian, Willacy County, and expanded a Mexfly quarantine in Brownsville, Cameron County. On April 16, APHIS and TDA established a Mexfly quarantine in Bayview, Cameron County.

The establishment of the Harlingen quarantine is in response to the confirmed detections from March 12-20 of six wild mated female Mexflies from traps in citrus trees in residential areas and commercial groves. The quarantine encompasses approximately 302 square miles of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties. There are 1,348 acres of commercial citrus in the quarantine area.

The establishment of the La Rosita quarantine is in response to the confirmed detection on March 22 of a wild mated female Mexfly in an orange tree in a residential area. The quarantine encompasses approximately 48 square miles of Starr County. There is no commercial agriculture in the quarantine area.

The expansion of the Sebastian quarantine is in response to the confirmed detection on March 21 of a wild mated female Mexfly from a trap in a sour orange tree in a residential area. As a result of this detection, the quarantine increased by 20 square miles to 91 square miles. APHIS and TDA established the original quarantine on March 21, as described in DA-2024-09. There are 44 acres of commercial citrus in the quarantine area.

The expansion of the Brownsville quarantine is in response to the confirmed detections between March 21-22 of two wild mated female Mexflies from traps in sour orange trees in residential areas. As a result of these detections, the quarantine increased by 28 square miles to 99 square miles. APHIS and TDA established the original quarantine on March 21, as described in DA-2024-09. There are 112 acres of commercial citrus in the quarantine area.

The establishment of the Bayview quarantine is in response to the confirmed detection on April 4 of a wild mated female Mexfly from a trap in a grapefruit tree in a commercial grove. The quarantine encompasses approximately 71 square miles of Cameron County. There are 298 acres of commercial citrus in the quarantine area.

APHIS is applying safeguarding measures and restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles to prevent the spread of Mexfly to non-infested areas of the United States, as well as to prevent the entry of these fruit flies into foreign trade. APHIS is working with TDA to eradicate transient Mexfly populations following program guidelines for survey, treatment, and regulatory actions.

The establishment and expansion of these quarantine areas is reflected on the [APHIS exotic fruit flies website](#), which contains a description of all current federal fruit fly quarantine areas. APHIS will publish a notice of these changes in the Federal Register.

For additional information on the Mexfly quarantine areas, please contact Fruit Fly National Policy Manager Richard Johnson at 301-851-2109 or richard.n.johnson@usda.gov.

/s/

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