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

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FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

DA-2024-40

October 4, 2024

Subject: APHIS Expands and Consolidates Mexican Fruit Fly (*Anastrepha ludens*) Quarantine Areas in Texas

To: State, Territory, and Tribal Agricultural Regulatory Officials

On September 27, 2024, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) expanded the Harlingen and Sebastian Mexican fruit fly (*Anastrepha ludens*; Mexfly) quarantine areas in Texas, and consolidated them into a single quarantine area, now termed the Harlingen-Sebastian quarantine, spanning portions of Cameron, Hidalgo, and Willacy Counties.

Expansions occurred in three areas, following the confirmed detections on August 15 and 19 of Mexfly larvae in citrus fruits in residential areas of Santa Rosa, Cameron County; on September 12 of Mexfly larvae in citrus fruits, and on September 17 and

20 of wild mated female Mexflies from traps in fruit trees, in residential areas of Sebastian, Willacy County; and on September 17 of Mexfly larvae in orange fruits in a commercial grove and a wild mated female Mexfly from a trap in an orange tree in a residential area of La Feria, Cameron County. As a result of these changes, the combined quarantine area was increased by 72 square miles to 368 square miles. There are 1,387 acres of commercial citrus in the quarantine area.

APHIS and TDA established the Sebastian quarantine on March 21, following the detection of a wild mated female Mexfly on March 13, expanded the quarantine on April 3, May 20, and August 2, following the detections of additional flies and Mexfly larvae, and released portions of the quarantine on August 2 and August 30, after three generations elapsed since the dates of the last detections in those portions.

APHIS and TDA established the Harlingen quarantine on March 26, following the detections of six wild mated female Mexflies from March 12-20, expanded the quarantine on May 20, June 27, and August 29, following the detections of additional flies and Mexfly larvae, and released portions of the quarantine on August 29, after three generations elapsed since the dates of the last detections in those portions.

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 changes to 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 this change in the Federal Register.

For additional information on the Mexfly quarantine areas, please contact:

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Plant Protection and Quarantine