

FOR INFORMATION

DA-2008-35

July 22, 2008

SUBJECT: Lemon, *Citrus limon*, as a host for Mediterranean fruit fly, *Ceratitidis capitata*

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Center for Plant Health Science and Technology (CPHST) staff is making a report available on the status of lemon fruit as a host for Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly). This report presents findings from a meeting of APHIS fruit fly regulatory and trade personnel and fruit fly experts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service held on September 12 and 13, 2007, in Riverdale, Maryland. Over 90 publications and reports were reviewed and analyzed by meeting participants in order to provide supporting evidence with regard to the host status of lemon.

In the past, APHIS did not consider lemons to be a host for Medfly. Consequently, no phytosanitary requirements for Medfly were imposed on lemons imported from areas infested with Medfly or moved interstate from areas in the United States quarantined for Medfly. However, in 2006, live Medfly larvae were intercepted among shipments of Spanish lemons. Those interceptions led APHIS to revisit the science supporting our previous policy on the host status of lemons for Medfly.

While the CPHST report concludes that overripe or over-mature lemon fruit conditions lead to Medfly susceptibility, it also acknowledges that more research is needed to determine the point at which maturing lemon fruit becomes susceptible to this pest. APHIS continues to assess the implications of these findings in order to determine: (1) what phytosanitary protocols are required to mitigate the pest risk associated with the foreign importation of lemons from countries that have Medfly infestations and (2) what domestic regulatory requirements are needed to effectively quarantine the potential reoccurrence of a Medfly outbreak in the United States.

A copy of the report is available for viewing on APHIS' Web site; the Web address is http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fruit_flies/index.shtml. APHIS welcomes your comments on the CPHST report. Based on the feedback received, we will determine what regulatory action needs to be taken.

For additional details on the January 2008 CPHST report, which is attached, please contact Laura Lewandowski, Plant Protection and Quarantine Program Analyst, at Area Code (301) 734-5242.

/s/ Rebecca A. Bech

Rebecca A. Bech
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

1 Attachment:
Lemon Medfly Report, January 2008