

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2008-78
December 29, 2008

SUBJECT: *Ceratitis capitata* (Mediterranean fruit fly) – Expansion of a Quarantine Area in San Diego, California

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On December 22, 2008, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) expanded the designated Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) quarantine area in the El Cajon area of San Diego County, California. On November 25, 2008, APHIS designated portions of San Diego County as a Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) quarantine area after confirming the finding of a Medfly population and applied restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. These actions are necessary to prevent the spread of Medfly to noninfested areas of the United States. This Medfly outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under eradication.

From November 7 through December 19, 2008, APHIS, in cooperation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner, confirmed the detection of twenty one adult Medflies on fifteen separate residential properties in the El Cajon area. Also, two Medfly larvae were detected at one separate residential property and one residential property on which adults were also detected in the El Cajon area. These detections triggered the establishment and expansion of this quarantine area. The quarantine area has been expanded by 32 square miles and now the boundary encompasses a total of approximately 139 square miles of San Diego County mostly comprised of residential housing with a few commercial avocado, orange, and grape producers.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding the detection sites. The population control treatment, known as sterile insect technique (SIT), is being conducted in a 50.60-square-mile area surrounding detection sites. SIT is an eradication tool which consists of the aerial release of sterile male Medflies to inundate the detected wild population to reduce reproduction. Sterile male Medflies are released at rate of 250,000 per square mile per week. The weekly release of sterile male Medflies will continue through two projected Medfly life cycles in the El Cajon area from the last detection date. In addition to SIT, spinosad foliar bait spray treatments are being applied to all host trees within 200 meters of the detection sites at 7 to 10 day intervals. Spinosad foliar bait sprays will continue through one projected Medfly life cycle from the last detection date.

This action is effective immediately. This establishment of this quarantine area will be reflected on the following designated website, which contains a description of all the current Federal fruit fly quarantine areas:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fruit_flies/index.shtml

APHIS anticipates following this action with the publication of a notice in the Federal Register informing the public of this change. For additional information on this Mediterranean fruit fly eradication program, you may contact Wayne Burnett, Domestic Coordinator, Fruit Fly Exclusion and Detection Programs, at Area Code (301) 734-4387.

/s/ Osama A. El-Lissy for

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