

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2007-16
April 24, 2007

SUBJECT: *Anastrepha ludens* (Mexican Fruit Fly) - Quarantined Area in
Webb County, Texas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

The Mexican fruit fly is currently present, but under eradication, in three counties of Texas. This memorandum provides notification that APHIS is expanding the quarantine list to include areas in Webb County, Texas, and applying restrictions on interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. Mexican fruit fly has been detected as a transient population in the Laredo area of Webb County, Texas, which necessitates eradication actions. These actions are necessary to prevent the spread of Mexican fruit fly to non-infested areas of the United States.

One adult mated female Mexican fruit fly was detected on March 6, 2007, in a McPhail trap baited with torula yeast in the Laredo area of Webb County, Texas. The trap was on the property of a community college within an urbanized area. This detection triggered the initiation of this expansion of the quarantine area. The detection site is within 200 meters of the U.S. border with Mexico, and the established quarantine boundary encompasses approximately 31 square miles of Webb County, Texas.

There are no commercial host production sites in the quarantined area. The Laredo International Airport is within the quarantined area; in addition, two international vehicular/pedestrian land border crossings and one rail crossing are also within the quarantined area. The closest commercial host production is about 125 miles southeast of the detection site in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding the detection site. Foliar bait spray treatments, using a protein bait spray containing Spinosad, are being applied to all host trees within 200 meters of the detection at 7 to 10 day intervals. The aerial release of sterile Mexican fruit flies is being conducted as a further control measure. The weekly release rate is 320,000 sterile Mexican fruit flies per square mile in a 3.5 square-mile area surrounding the infested property. Both the foliar bait spray treatments and the weekly release of sterile Mexican fruit flies will continue through two projected life cycles of the Mexican fruit fly in the Laredo area.

This action is effective immediately. Attached is the Federal Domestic Quarantine Order, delineating the new quarantined area for Mexican fruit fly in Webb County, Texas. This will be reflected in an Interim Rule that we anticipate will soon be published in the Federal Register for public comment in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.

/s/ Richard L. Dunkle

Richard L. Dunkle
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment

FEDERAL ORDER

Domestic Quarantine in Webb County, Texas for Mexican Fruit Fly (*Anastrepha ludens*)

This Federal Order is issued under the regulatory authority provided by the Plant Protection Act of June 20, 2000, as amended, Section 412(a), 7 U.S.C. 7712(a), which authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit or restrict the movement in interstate commerce of any plant, plant part, or article if the Secretary determines the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the dissemination of a plant pest within the United States and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Plant Protection Act found at 7 CFR 301.64.

Mexican fruit fly has been found in Laredo, Webb County, Texas, and the Administrator has reason to believe that the Mexican fruit fly is present. Therefore, effective immediately we are temporarily designating the following area in Webb County, Texas, as a quarantined area:

To be inserted when received.

The 7 CFR 301.64-3(a) allows the quarantine of less than an entire state only when the state enforces an intrastate quarantine that matches the Oriental fruit fly regulations.

The 7 CFR 301.64-3(b) provides for temporary designation of new quarantined areas pending publication of a rule to add affected areas to the list shown in 7CFR 301.93-3(c).

Effectively immediately, persons seeking movement of regulated articles designated in 7 CFR 301.64-2 should refer to 7 CFR 301.64-4 for conditions governing the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantine articles.

This action will be reflected in an Interim Rule that we anticipate will soon be published in the Federal Register for public comment in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.