

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2012-10
March 27, 2012

SUBJECT: Mexican Fruit Fly, *Anastrepha ludens* – APHIS Establishes Quarantine Area in the San Benito Area of Cameron County, Texas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On March 9, 2012, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) established a Mexican fruit fly (Mexfly) quarantine area in the San Benito area of Cameron County, Texas. APHIS is applying restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from this area in order to prevent the spread of Mexfly to noninfested areas of the United States. This Mexfly outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under eradication.

From February 27 to March 7, 2012, seven unmated and one mated adult female Mexflies were detected in grapefruit and orange trees located in a commercial grove in the San Benito area of Cameron County, Texas. APHIS, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), is responding to the detection.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at standard protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding all Mexfly detection sites. Spinosad or malathion foliar bait spray treatments are being applied to all host trees surrounding the detection sites according to program guidelines. To control Mexfly populations within the new quarantine area, APHIS is conducting Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) activities over the entire quarantine area. SIT is an eradication tool, which consists of the inundated aerial release of sterile male Mexflies into the detected wild population to reduce reproduction.

The establishment of this quarantine area is posted on the following APHIS 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 the Mexfly Eradication Program, you may contact Wayne Burnett, APHIS Exotic Fruit Fly Director, at (301) 734-6553.

/s/ Osama A. El-Lissy /for

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