

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2013-23
June 10, 2013

SUBJECT: APHIS Establishes Mexican Fruit Fly, *Anastrepha ludens*, Regulated Area in the Mercedes and Donna Areas of Hidalgo and Cameron County, Texas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On May 6, 2013, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) established a Mexican fruit fly (Mexfly) regulated area in the Mercedes and Donna areas of Hidalgo and Cameron County, Texas. Effective immediately, APHIS is applying restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from these areas. These actions are necessary in order to prevent the spread of Mexfly to non-infested areas of the United States. This outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under eradication.

On May 2, Mexfly larvae were confirmed from a small citrus grove in Mercedes, Texas. The larval survey was in response to the detection of an adult Mexfly in the area on May 1. Subsequently, two additional Mexfly larval sites and 14 adult Mexflies were detected. APHIS, in cooperation with TDA, is responding to these detections by establishing a new regulated area, which encompasses approximately 172-square miles in Hidalgo and Cameron counties.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding all Mexfly detection sites. In order to control and eradicate the Mexfly populations within the new regulated area, APHIS is applying Spinosad foliar bait treatments and conducting Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) over the fruit fly hosts in the regulated area. SIT consists of ground and aerial release of sterile Mexflies into the detected wild Mexfly population in order to reduce reproduction.

The establishment of this regulated area will be reflected on the following designated website, which contains a description of all the current Federal fruit fly regulated areas:
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/fruit_flies/index.shtml

For additional information on the Mexfly Eradication Program, you may contact John Stewart, National Fruit Fly Policy Manager, at (919) 855-7426.

/s/ **Jeff Grode** for

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