

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2010-35
August 23, 2010

SUBJECT: Detection of Sweet Orange Scab (*Elsinoë australis*) in Texas and Louisiana

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On July 23, 2010, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) confirmed the identification of the fungal pathogen, *Elsinoë australis*, causal agent of Sweet Orange Scab (SOS), on residential lemon and tangerine trees in Harris County, Texas. Citrus samples were initially collected as part of the annual citrus commodity survey performed under a cooperative agreement with Texas A&M University through the Citrus Health Response Program (CHRP). The detections in Harris County are approximately 320 miles from the lower Rio Grande Valley where most of the commercial citrus production in Texas is located. This is the first confirmation of SOS in the United States.

Surveys completed within 1-square mile of the initial detection have resulted in 6 additional SOS detections on citrus trees located on 4 separate residential properties; all in close proximity to the initial Harris County detection. As part of a citrus commodity survey, a small farm located in Orange County, Texas, was also found to have infested Satsuma trees. The detection in Orange County is located 100-miles east of the initial find.

On August 20, 2010, APHIS confirmed the presence of SOS in Orleans Parish, Louisiana as part of the CHRP citrus greening or Huanglongbing sentinel site survey. The detection was located on a single residential lime tree. The detection in Orleans Parish is approximately 15-20 miles from commercial citrus production areas in Louisiana.

Federal Emergency Action Notifications were issued to the property owners requiring that fruit, leaves, branches and other plant parts remain on the property. APHIS is coordinating with the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas A&M University, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry and, the Louisiana State University AgCenter to determine the source and the extent of the infestation.

On August 13, 2010, a technical working group, consisting of subject matter experts, was convened to address specific questions upon which an effective coordinated regulatory response will be developed.

Under the International Plant Protection Convention standards, *Elsinoë australis* is considered to be a pest that is transient, actionable, and under surveillance.

For additional information, you may contact Phil Mason, Western Regional Program Manager, at (970) 494-7565 or Deborah McPartlan, National Program Manager, at (301) 734-5356.

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