

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2010-58
December 1, 2010

SUBJECT: Detection of Sweet Orange Scab (*Elsinoë australis*) in Mississippi

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On October 22, 2010, the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory received eight sets of *Citrus* spp. fruit collected in residential areas in Pearl River, Hancock, and Harrison counties. These samples were confirmed by sequencing to be positive for the fungal pathogen, *Elsinoë australis*, causal agent of Sweet Orange Scab (SOS).

Federal Emergency Action Notifications have been issued to the property owners requiring that fruit, leaves, branches and other plant parts remain on the property. APHIS is coordinating with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture to determine the source and the extent of the infestation.

On July 23, 2010, APHIS confirmed the identification of SOS on residential lemon and tangerine trees in Harris County, Texas. This was the first confirmation of SOS in the United States. Currently, 11 counties in Texas have been confirmed with SOS. On August 20, 2010, APHIS also confirmed the presence of SOS in Orleans Parish, Louisiana. The detection was located on a single residential lime tree. Subsequent detection survey activities have resulted in 14 additional parishes confirmed positive for the fungal pathogen.

On August 13, 2010, a technical working group consisting of subject matter experts was convened to address specific questions upon which an effective control program can be developed. In addition, APHIS and cooperators are in the process of finalizing the regulatory framework to facilitate safe movement of regulated articles from quarantine areas.

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 Leon Bunce, Eastern Regional Program Manager, at (919) 855-7360 or Deborah McPartlan, National Program Manager, at (301) 734-5356.

/s/ Jane E. Levy for

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