

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2007-37
September 14, 2007

SUBJECT: Detections of Coffee Berry Borer in Puerto Rico

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On August 20, 2007, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of the coffee berry borer (CBB), *Hypothenemus hampei*, in San Sebastián, Puerto Rico. Subsequently, a second detection was made and confirmed in Utuado, Puerto Rico. These represent the first detections of this pest in the United States. APHIS considers these detections to be transient and under surveillance. Previous records made of CBB's presence in Puerto Rico were determined to be erroneous by researchers in 2002. The New Pest Advisory Group is analyzing the confirmed detection of CBB in Puerto Rico and is developing recommendations.

Adult female CBB bore a hole in coffee berries and lay 30 to 50 eggs in galleries within the berry. Larval feeding on the endosperm (seed) greatly reduces yields and quality and can also cause abscission of the berry. It takes 25-35 days to reach the adult stage. There is a 10:1 female to male sex ratio, and after sibling mating inside the berry, inseminated adult females emerge in search of berries in which to oviposit. Un-harvested berries and berries that have fallen in the ground can harbor live CBB. The insect could possibly be transported in burlap bags containing coffee beans with the husk remaining.

The CBB occurs in most coffee growing regions of the world, where it can be a serious pest. In Puerto Rico, 2002 estimates from USDA's National Agriculture Statistics Service show approximately 9,000 coffee farms with approximately 57 million trees. A variety of cultural, biological, and chemical controls are used worldwide to control CBB. Coffee that is exported from Puerto Rico is normally roasted prior to shipping.

The Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture (DAPR) is coordinating with local agronomists to conduct visual surveys for CBB damage in the fields they service. Wherever berry damage is observed that is indicative to CBB infestation, intensive survey sampling will be conducted by DAPR and APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine personnel to detect and confirm the presence of the pest and delimit the infested area.

For more information about the CBB and the Puerto Rico detections, please contact Billy Newton in the PPQ Eastern Region at (919) 855-7335.

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