

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2009-60
November 25, 2009

SUBJECT: Mediterranean Fruit Fly, *Ceratitis capitata* – Expansion of the Quarantine in the Escondido Area of San Diego County, California

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is expanding the Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) quarantine area in the Escondido area of San Diego County, California, following further detection of a Medfly population in that area. APHIS is applying restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from the quarantine area. These actions are necessary to prevent the spread of Medfly to noninfested areas of the United States. This Medfly outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under eradication.

On September 9, 2009, one adult mated female Medfly was detected on a residential property in the Escondido area of San Diego, California. On September 30, 2009, APHIS established a quarantine area surrounding this detection site. From October 19, 2009, through October 25, 2009, two adult males and one mated adult female Medflies were also detected within the quarantine area on three other residential properties. APHIS, in cooperation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the San Diego County Department of Agriculture, is responding to these confirmed Medfly findings. These confirmed findings have triggered the expansion of the quarantine area by 37 miles to approximately 114-square miles of San Diego County. There is approximately 3,800 acres of commercial production of host commodities within this new quarantine area, consisting mostly of avocados and citrus, plus small amounts of acreage in persimmon, tomato, cherimoya, and guava.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding the new Medfly detection site. Spinosad foliar bait spray treatments are being applied to all host trees within 200 meters of the detection site at 7-10 day intervals. As a treatment to control Medfly populations within the new quarantine area, Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) is being conducted in an 18.85-square-mile treatment area surrounding the detection site. SIT is an eradication tool, which consists of the aerial release of sterile male Medflies to inundate the detected wild population in order to reduce reproduction. Sterile male Medflies are released at rate of 250,000-per-square-mile per week. The weekly release of sterile Medflies will continue in the San Diego area through two projected Medfly lifecycles since the date of the latest detection.

This action became effective on November 19, 2009. The establishment of this quarantine area will be reflected on the following designated 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

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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 Medfly Eradication Program, you may contact Wayne Burnett, APHIS Exotic Fruit Fly Director, at (301) 734-6553.

/s/ Michael A. Lidsky /for

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