

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2011-24
May 2, 2011

SUBJECT: Mexican Fruit Fly, *Anastrepha ludens* – Establishment of a New Quarantine Area in the Bayview Area of Cameron County, Texas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On April 22, 2011, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) established a new Mexican fruit fly (Mexfly) quarantine area, effective immediately, in the Bayview area of Cameron County, Texas. APHIS is applying restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from the quarantine area. These actions are necessary in order to prevent the spread of Mexfly to noninfested areas of the United States. This Mexfly outbreak is considered to be transient, actionable, and under eradication.

From March 28, 2011 to April 14, 2011, a total of three unmated and one mated adult female Mexflies were detected on a three different commercial citrus properties in the Bayview area of Cameron County, Texas. APHIS, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Agriculture, is responding to this confirmed Mexfly finding. This confirmed finding triggered the establishment of the new quarantine area, which encompasses approximately 81-square miles of Cameron County.

Fruit fly traps have been deployed at protocol levels to conduct a delimitation survey surrounding all Mexfly detection sites. Spinosad or malathion foliar bait spray treatments are being applied to all host trees surrounding the detection sites at according to protocol in conjunction with the removal of any existing fruit. As a treatment to control Mexfly populations within the new quarantine area, Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) is being conducted over the entire quarantine area. SIT is an eradication tool, which consists of the massive aerial release of sterile male Mexflies into the detected wild population in order to reduce reproduction. Sterile Mexflies are released at a rate of 500,000-per-square-mile each week.

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

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

/s/ Rebecca A. Bech

Rebecca A. Bech
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine