

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2012-38
September 13, 2012

SUBJECT: Confirmation of *Xerolenta obvia* (White heath snail) in Montana

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On August 8, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) confirmed the identification of *Xerolenta obvia*, White heath snail, in Belt, Cascade County, Montana; this detection is a new State record. Prior to this detection, *Xerolenta obvia*, had only been found in the State of Michigan.

After the initial determination, PPQ and MDA began further delimitation in adjacent areas. Most positive survey sites are located along roadsides and include residential and small ranchette-type properties, as well as some agricultural acreage. Some hay fields were found to be infested; however, no snails were detected in wheat production fields. PPQ and MDA continue outreach and delimiting activities to determine the extent of the infestation and the appropriate regulatory action.

Xerolenta obvia is native to southeastern and central Europe where it is considered a serious pest. This species is known to feed on fodder crops (e.g., alfalfa, clover, and lupine) and has been intercepted in shipments of fruits and vegetables. In addition, this snail can transmit spores of various fungal plant pathogens and is a possible vector of sheep lungworm.

For further information about the snail programs, please contact Kristian Rondeau, Western Region Program Manager, at (970) 494-7563 or Andrea Simao, National Program Manager, at (301) 851-2067.

/s/ Osama A. El-Lissy /for

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