

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2008-26
June 24, 2008

SUBJECT: Confirmation of Citrus Greening and Asian Citrus Psyllid in Louisiana

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On May 29, 2008, APHIS confirmed Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) in Louisiana and to date, populations of ACP have been confirmed in Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Charles parishes. Where psyllids are found, leaf samples are also being gathered to test them for possible presence of citrus greening bacteria. Citrus greening (CG, also known as Huanglongbing or HLB) is caused by the pathogen *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*.

On June 12, 2008 the PPQ Molecular Diagnostics Laboratory and the PPQ-CPHST National Plant Germplasm and Biotechnology Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland confirmed the identification of CG in a leaf sample from a residential property in Algiers, Orleans parish, Louisiana. The samples in which CG was confirmed were from a lime tree on which ACP had previously been found. These are the first confirmations of ACP and CG in Louisiana.

The presence of the psyllids was first brought to the attention of the Louisiana State University AgCenter through the submission of a digital photograph taken by a homeowner. On a follow-up visit to the property APHIS and Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry (LDAF) inspectors obtained specimens of psyllid adult and immature stages that, when tested, were found to harbor CG bacteria. Subsequently, the homeowner voluntarily allowed LDAF officials to remove and incinerate the CG-infected tree.

In response, APHIS and the LDAF are now delimiting the extent of infestation by inspecting host plants on residential properties, commercial groves, and nurseries (both retail and production) in Orleans parish and in other South Louisiana parishes. To date, ACP is confirmed to be present in Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Charles parishes. Three adult psyllids were found on a single plant in a retail store in Lafourche parish. All citrus stock at the store was destroyed. No additional psyllids have been found to date in the immediate vicinity of this store and surveys are continuing.

APHIS and LDAF inspectors are issuing emergency action notifications (EANs) to all nurseries where ACP is found to prevent the movement of infested plants. When psyllids are found in nurseries, samples are submitted for testing along with plant tissue samples.

With the confirmation of CG in Orleans parish, APHIS is working with LDAF to take appropriate regulatory action to prevent the movement of host plants and plant material from the parish. Initially, this will include the issuance of EANs to all nurseries in the parish and prohibiting the movement of host plants from any infected properties. APHIS

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has amended the January 11, 2008 CG/ACP Federal Order. Changes to the Federal Order will include adding Orleans parish and any other parishes where CG is found to the list of areas quarantined for CG. Movement of host plants of CG and ACP will be prohibited from this infested parish. The Federal Order also contains regulatory provisions for movement of ACP host plants from Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, and St. Charles parishes. The Federal Domestic Quarantine Order is attached and effective immediately. LDAF officials have prepared an emergency rule in parallel with the Federal Order that will regulate intrastate movement. This parallel quarantine was signed on June 23, 2008 and will be effective on June 30, 2008.

APHIS continues to work closely with officials from the LDAF to delimit the presence of both ACP and CG while assessing what other measures need to be taken in response to these new finds. ACP and CG are considered to be transient, actionable and under surveillance in Louisiana.

For additional information about this quarantine, you may contact Patrick Gomes, National Coordinator, Citrus Health Response Program, at Area Code (919) 855-7313.

/s/ John H. Payne /for

Rebecca A. Bech
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment:
Federal Order