

WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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June 2004

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Exotic Pest Detection Trapping

Summer is approaching, and with it comes the start of trapping for exotic insect pests. We have had four trappers working full-time to set these traps. We have set 425 Med fly, 150 McPhail, 150 Oriental Fruit Fly, 150 Melon Fly, 400 Gypsy Moth, 152 Japanese Beetle, and 6 Exotic Wood Beetle traps.



Gypsy Moth



Med Fly

The California Department of Food and Agriculture as well as the County Agricultural Commissioners work very hard to keep exotic insect pests from entering California. Sometimes exotic insect pests do get in. They can get in through smuggled illegal fruit, people bringing fruit or other articles in from infested areas without realizing it, and through other means. The trapping program is designed to detect exotic insect pests before they are able to build their populations to the point that it could not be possible to eradicate them.

If these pests were able to become established in Sonoma County they would not only impact our agriculture, but could cause backyard fruit to be unusable, could kill turf lawns, and defoliate trees.

Plastic Container Recycle

On April 22, 2004, we held our spring plastic pesticide container recycling event at the Healdsburg county corporation yard. 59 growers participated in this event. This year due to budget cutbacks we were only able to hold the container recycling at one location. The recycling event was open to growers, nurseries, pest control businesses, golf courses, parks, and government agencies. Containers ranging in size from 1 quart to 55 gallons were collected. Participants in this event were able to recycle 6,600 pounds of plastic containers, that otherwise would have ended in a landfill.



Vine Mealybug Trapping



Vine Mealybug

Growers can pick-up traps for Vine Mealybug at the University of California Extension (UCCE) Office located at 133 Aviation Blvd. #109, Santa Rosa (next door to our office). Instruction sheets with placement and timing of deployment will be handed out with the traps. UCCE will once again be collecting information about the traps, so they will ask growers to fill out some information when they pick-up the trap and when they drop-off the traps. UCCE has handed out approximately 750 traps so far this month.

compliance interviews and other methods to help the regulated community comply with the requirements.

Civil penalty action fine guidelines as found in the California Code of Regulations 6130:

Class A: Violations which created an actual health or environmental hazard, violations of a lawful order of the commissioner, or violations that are repeat Class B violations. The fine range for Class A violations is \$700-\$5,000.

Class B: Violations which posed a reasonable possibility of creating a health or environmental effect or violations that are repeat Class C violations. The fine range for Class B violations is \$250-\$1,000.

Class C: Violations that are not defined in either Class A or Class B. The fine range for Class C violations is \$50-\$400.

The increases in the fine levels became effective in May 27, 2004.

New Fine Levels for Civil Penalty Actions



The California Department of Pesticide Regulation has adopted new regulations regarding County Agricultural Commissioners fine levels for civil penalty actions. In accordance with AB 947, which was passed by the legislature and signed into law on September 11, 2002, the new fine levels now carry a maximum of \$5,000 for the most serious violations. The previous maximum was \$1,000.

Civil penalties are only one of a variety of tools the Agricultural Commissioner's Office uses to gain compliance, other tools include education,