

WINDOW ON AGRICULTURE

Office of the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

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April 2005

Marilyn Vernon and Suzanne Ostrom

FALL PEST CONTROL MANAGEMENT UPDATE SCHEDULED

Dates for the fall Pest Control Management Update class at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) have been announced. This class will take place Friday, October 14, 2005 from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. and Saturday, October 15, 2005 from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. The California Department of Pesticide Regulation approved this class for 10 hours of continuing education. Look for this class in the SRJC catalog and register for the fall 2005 semester.

CHEMIGATION TRAINING RECAP

On March 17, 2005, the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's office hosted chemigation training presented by Tim Jacobsen of the Center for Irrigation Technology and Craig Nordmark from the Department of Pesticide Regulation. The training covered the required irrigation components needed to apply pesticides through irrigation systems.

The training included one hour of classroom instruction and three hours of in-field instruction. The training format was especially helpful since participants were able to discuss generalities in the classroom setting and then go into the field and examine actual chemigation equipment, as it would be used.

Thirty-one growers and pest control advisors participated in the training. The Department of Pesticide Regulation approved the training as 1.5 hours of continuing education.

Our thanks to the growers and dealers that helped set up the in-field portion of the training.

GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER UPDATE

So far this year Sonoma County Agricultural Inspectors have found four viable Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter (GWSS) egg masses on incoming plant shipments, the last one on March 18, 2005. All of the infested plants were returned to the shipping nurseries. The population of GWSS in the infested areas of Southern California has been found to be higher this year due to the wet and warm weather conditions that occurred early in the year. This has resulted in a statewide increase of interceptions of GWSS in nursery plant shipments.

Currently we have seven extra-help Agricultural Program Assistants working full time inspecting plant shipments for our GWSS program, they are: Gail Carter, April Golterman, Dennis Haydon, Greg Music, Sam Pratt, Ramon Meraz, and Paul Lasker. Also in the first week of April we began our urban GWSS trapping. We will be deploying approximately 450 traps in urban areas.

GLASSY-WINGED SHARPSHOOTER UPDATE (CONT.)

We have two Agricultural Program Assistants who will be trapping, Richard Opbroek and Jessica Scroggins.

The Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office remains committed to keeping Sonoma County Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter free.

USDA REQUESTS NOMINATIONS TO FILL UPCOMING VACANCIES ON NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS BOARD

In a press release dated April 5, 2005, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it is seeking nominations to fill six upcoming vacancies on the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, will appoint them to serve a five-year term of office to commence on January 24, 2006, and run until January 24, 2011.

The NOSB is a 15-member board responsible for developing and recommending to the Secretary a proposed National List of Approved and Prohibited Substances, as required by the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990. The National List identifies synthetic substances that may be used and the nonsynthetic substances that cannot be used in organic production and handling operations. The NOSB also advises the Secretary on other aspects of the National Organic Program.

The USDA is asking for nominations to fill the following six upcoming NOSB vacancies: organic producer (two positions), consumer/public interest (three positions), and USDA accredited certifying agent (one position). To serve on the NOSB, an individual must be an owner or operator of an organic production operation, an individual who represents public interest or consumer interest groups, or an individual who is a USDA accredited organic certifying agent. The USDA will follow equal opportunity practices in all appointments to the NOSB.

Written nominations, accompanied by resumes, must be postmarked on or before July 15, 2005, and sent to the following:

Katherine E. Benham
Advisory Board Specialist
National Organic Program
USDA-AMS-TMP-NOP
1400 Independence Ave
SW Room 4008-S
Mail Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250.

For more information, contact Katherine Benham at (202) 205-7806; e-mail: Katherine.benham@usda.gov; or fax at (202) 205-7808.