

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

- The Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), an aphid-like insect, is a serious pest of all citrus and closely-related plants because it can transmit the disease huanglongbing (HLB) when it feeds on the plants' leaves and stems.
- HLB is the most devastating disease of citrus in the world. Symptoms of HLB include yellow shoots, leaf mottle, small upright leaves and lopsided fruit with a bitter flavor. Infected trees decline in health, produce inedible fruit and eventually die. There is no cure for the disease and infected trees must be removed and destroyed to prevent further spread of HLB.
- Establishment of ACP and HLB would cause economic losses via direct damage to citrus plants and quarantine restrictions designed to mitigate the spread of ACP.
- California has a \$1.88 billion citrus industry. If the ACP begins to transmit the disease HLB, the entire industry could be at risk. In one recent study in Florida, the presence of HLB increased citrus production costs by 40%.
- The states of Texas, Mississippi and Alabama have detected the ACP but not the HLB disease. Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Louisiana have detected both the pest and the disease. HLB infected psyllids have already caused devastation in Asia, India, parts of the Middle East, and South and Central America. The psyllids have also been detected in Hawaii, and both the pest and disease have been detected in Mexico.
- HLB has not been detected in trapped psyllids or trees in California.
- California's citrus industry ranks first in the U.S. in terms of value and second (after Florida) in terms of production. California's total citrus production has averaged 3.2 million tons per season over the past three seasons, about 24 percent of the nation's total. California is the nation's main source (80 percent) of fresh market oranges, while Florida grows oranges mainly for juice. California also supplies 87 percent of the nation's lemons (source: USDA Economic Research Service).

LIFE CYCLE

- ACP lay their eggs on the tips of growing shoots on and between unfurling leaves.
- Females lay 300 to 800 eggs during their lifetime.
- Nymphs pass through five instars. The total life cycle requires from 15 to 47 days, depending on environmental factors such as temperature and season.
- Adults may live for more than a month and there are typically nine to 10 generations per year, with up to 16 under observation in field cages.

ERADICATION PROGRAM

- Yellow panel traps are placed throughout a project area at a density of 100 traps in the core and 50 traps per square mile in the surrounding eight square miles of an ACP find.
- Within 400 meters of an ACP find, citrus trees and host plants will be treated with a foliar application of the material Tempo™, which eliminates the ACP on contact.
- Within 400 meters of an ACP find, each host tree or plant will also receive a soil drench with Merit™, a systemic treatment that will remain active to guard against psyllids for an extended period of time.

MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE

CDFA - www.cdfa.ca.gov/phpps/

CDFA Pest Hotline: 800-491-1899

USDA – www.saveourcitrus.org

Citrus Research Board - www.californiacitrusthreat.org

