

Feb. 1, 2003

Kern/Tulare

GWSS Update



A project of the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Task Force of Kern and Tulare Counties. Participants: Agricultural Commissioner Offices of Kern and Tulare Counties, California Department of Food and Agriculture, University of California-Cooperative Extension, U.S. Department of Agriculture (APHIS and ARS Divisions).

Kern's GWSS Area-wide Program reviewed at Symposium

An overview of Kern County's Area-wide Management program for GWSS was among the proceedings highlighted at the Pierce's Disease Research Symposium held in San Diego in December.

Involved in the program are project team members Lloyd Wendel, Matt Ciomperlik, David Bartels, Isabelle Lauziere and Beth Stone-Smith of the USDA-APHIS GWSS Emergency Program; Don Luvisi, UC-Cooperative Extension; and CFDA's David Elms. The Kern County Department of Agriculture and the Kern-Tulare Task Force assisted as cooperators. USDA-APHIS funded the study.

The group reported that the year 2002 marked the second of a proposed three-year study to develop and demonstrate area-wide management of GWSS in Kern County.

Success in 2001. The first year, 2001, successfully demonstrated the area-wide concept as a strategy to reduce GWSS to very low population densities in a robust multi-crop perennial growing system. Critical to this success is a well-organized and coordinated delivery system that growers can adapt to their present pest management programs.

The strategy in the 2001 pilot study was to treat citrus using an action threshold of greater than one GWSS per tree, which resulted in 1,830 acres out of 3,600 receiving a foliar knockdown insecticide. All citrus received a single systemic application of Admire® following the foliar treatments. All 13,000 acres were monitored utilizing a combination of direct observations and sticky traps arrayed in a one-quarter-mile grid.

Grower interest in the results of the 2001 pilot study culminated in a request to initiate an area-wide program in Kern County. An expanded program was implemented in the county. This area-wide program utilized the strategies developed in the first year of the pilot study.

Expanding to area-wide basis. Results from the monitoring program suggested that, in 2002, three of the groves treated in the 2001 pilot study required treatment with a systemic insecticide. Four groves

required only a foliar treatment. Although the GWSS populations in these groves were below the action threshold used in 2001, the decision was made to treat these as hot spots and prevent the possible re-infestation of adjacent groves.

Monitoring data indicates that the groves still infested in 2002 were adjacent to eucalyptus windbreaks that border the groves. The windbreaks initially were treated with a foliar insecticide treatment, but did not receive a systemic treatment to prevent recurring populations of GWSS. Researchers are waiting for an approved label to treat these windbreaks.

GWSS population monitoring in the pilot project study area, located south of Bakersfield, during 2002 indicates very low levels of infestation. Insecticide inputs during the second year of the study were minimal, suggesting the area-wide approach to treatment may provide adequate control of the pest over multiple years. The addition of natural enemies in the form of augmentative releases of egg parasitoids may extend this control, potentially building in a long-term, sustainable regulating component into the area-wide program.

Dividing into zones. Limited fiscal resources for an expanded area-wide program in Kern County required the county to be divided into zones that could be effectively managed with available funds. Four zones have been established, and are monitored for GWSS populations using a trapping grid of one trap per 32 acres.

The Northern Zone, in the Edison area, historically has been troubled with large populations of GWSS. This was the first zone to be treated. The management strategy followed the established protocol from the pilot study.

The current population of GWSS has been reduced to almost non-detectable levels in citrus. Since Pierce's disease is known to occur in this area of Kern County, vineyards that continued to have GWSS after harvest were treated to prevent their return into citrus. Hot-spot treatments for GWSS in grapes have reduced this population to similar levels as seen in citrus. ■

Contact:

Don Luvisi
Project coordinator
(661) 868-6226
daluvisi@ucdavis.edu

Web sites:

- www.kernag.com/kpp.htm
- www.co.kern.ca.us/farm/luvisi.htm

GWSS meeting for Kern's grape, citrus growers set for Feb. 3

Kern County citrus and grape growers are encouraged to attend a meeting to learn more about the Kern County Pilot and Area Wide GWSS Treatment Programs for 2003.

The meeting is set for Monday, Feb. 3 from 3-5 p.m. at the Kern County Agricultural Commissioner's Office at 1001 South Mt. Vernon Avenue in Bakersfield. It will be held in the large conference room.

For more information, contact the Kern County Agricultural Commissioner's Office at (661) 868-6300.