

Kern/Tulare

# GWSS Update



*A project of the Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Task Force of Kern and Tulare Counties. Participants: Agricultural Commissioner's 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).*

## PMA gears up for spring GWSS treatments in Tulare Co.

Things are about to get hectic at Pest Management Associates (PMA).

As the GWSS area-wide treatment coordinator for Tulare County, PMA is finalizing plans for spring treatments of the sharpshooter in citrus groves from Lindsay south to the Kern County border.

The Exeter-based company of independent pest control advisors will work with 600 Tulare County citrus growers to treat groves from late March into May.

"We have less government funding this year, so we can only treat about 18,000 acres of citrus this spring, compared to the 40,000 acres we treated last fall," says PMA's Judy Stewart-Leslie. "We'll focus on the hot spots, which we're already seeing northeast and south of Porterville."

CDFA and USDA are closely watching GWSS trap activity as the pests emerge from their winter dormancy. If GWSS activity is observed, PMA will be directed to contact growers about making treatments to knock down GWSS populations in citrus groves. Applications will be authorized for those groves that sit within one-quarter mile of GWSS trap activity.

By controlling populations of GWSS in citrus, program planners hope to prevent the pest from transmitting its Pierce's disease-causing bacteria to nearby vineyards. They also want to stop the pest's further spread northward into commercial citrus growing areas.

"The program is trying to help the citrus industry in this respect so that population numbers are kept down and growers will be able to continually ship their fruit GWSS-free, as is state regulation," says USDA entomologist Beth Stone-Smith, who helps support treatment coordinators and assists in USDA's program decisions on GWSS treatments.

"We'll wait until just prior to bloom in late March to make the treatments to ensure the trees get good uptake of the material," Stewart-Leslie says.

**Application materials.** Most treatments will be made with Bayer's systemic

insecticide, Admire®. This neonicotinoid, whose active ingredient is imidacloprid, is applied through drip irrigation. PMA is working closely with growers and local irrigation districts to make sure citrus groves have proper backflow prevention equipment.

"That equipment is key," says Stewart-Leslie.

Instead of using Admire, organic citrus growers will use PyGanic®, as they did last fall. PyGanic, a pyrethrin from McLaughlin Gormley King Company, is a knockdown material for GWSS with a shorter-lasting residual than Admire.

Stewart-Leslie points out that Admire not only knocks down GWSS but suppresses citricola scale in citrus groves.

"With proper application techniques, Admire has shown very long residual control of GWSS in other areas where it has been applied," she says.

**Less paperwork.** PMA has streamlined the paperwork needed to authorize treatments and reimbursements to citrus growers. For the spring applications, growers will not need to submit a pre-treatment or post-treatment notification to the county agricultural commissioner's office. If they signed a compliance agreement for last fall's treatment, growers don't need to sign that form again.

"The compliance agreement growers have signed is good for the life of the program," Stewart-Leslie says.

PMA will contact growers by phone, fax or regular mail about the letter of authorization needed to treat various blocks of citrus where GWSS is found.

Despite the demands of the next several weeks, PMA is optimistic about industry cooperation. "We had tremendously favorable response from growers last fall," Stewart-Leslie says. "It was very easy working with the citrus industry, farm managers and pest control advisors."

Stewart-Leslie can be reached at Pest Management Associates at (559) 592-9431.

— Catherine Merlo

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### Web sites:

- [www.co.kern.ca.us/kernag/](http://www.co.kern.ca.us/kernag/)
- [http://cekern.ucdavis.edu/Custom\\_Program444/](http://cekern.ucdavis.edu/Custom_Program444/)

## Tulare County citrus growers to meet Feb. 27

A meeting to share details of Tulare County's GWSS spring citrus treatment program with growers will be held Friday, Feb. 27 at 1 p.m. at the Porterville Veterans' Memorial Building.

Speakers will include:

- Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner Gary Kunkel and USDA's Lloyd Wendel on GWSS programs;
- CDFA's David Morgan on biological control of GWSS;
- UC's Beth Grafton-Cardwell on citrus IPM;
- Justin Golding of Pest Management Associates on specifics of the spring program;
- Bayer Crop-Science's Tim Sitton on how to use Admire; and
- Scott Edwards on regulations in the Lindsay-Strathmore Irrigation District.

For more information, contact Golding or Judy Stewart-Leslie at Pest Management Associates at (559) 592-9431.