

May 27, 2005

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).

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## New nursery inspection pilot program gets underway

Plant nurseries in Orange, Los Angeles and Ventura Counties are preparing to make their first shipments late this week and early next week under CDFA's new pilot nursery inspection program.

Under the program, the destination, or receiving, counties are San Joaquin and Sacramento.

"All of the participating companies have signed the necessary compliance agreements and are in the process of planning their first shipments and preparing their staffs," says CDFA spokesman Jay Van Rein.

The pilot program's objective is to determine whether the results of laboratory research by Dr. Rick Redak of the University of California-Riverside will be verified in a real-world shipment situation. Redak's studies, completed last year, showed a single treatment of either carbaryl, known by its trade name Sevin®, or fenprothrin, known as Tame®, was highly effective in



killing glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) nymphs as they emerged from egg masses on nursery plants.

"The protocols have been carefully devised to mirror regular shipping activities and handling," Van Rein says. "The only real differences are for the sake of safety, to

*(continued on page 2)*

*The success of the pilot program could substantially change the extensive inspection process now used to hunt for GWSS on plants at shipping and receiving nurseries. (Photo: Nursery Growers Association)*

## Solano County launches GWSS treatments after pest found again in Vacaville

Less than a year after discovering a glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) infestation in Vacaville, Solano County agricultural officials have launched a new round of treatments against the pest.

Thirteen recently hatched GWSS egg masses and two live nymphs were discovered during the last two weeks in the same area where sharpshooters were detected in June 2004. The finds were made on crape myrtle trees behind the Wal-Mart store at Barton Avenue and Helen Power Drive.

The recent GWSS finds were expected.

"The findings are thought to be residual effects of a 2004 infestation and

the office is prepared for it," said Susan Cohen, Solano County agricultural commissioner. "We knew we would begin the season with this situation. There are inevitably going to be some lingering effects from last year."

Solano County treated the area May 20 to assure that the nymphs don't mature into the flying adult state.

Since the finding, the county inspection team has surveyed the quarter-mile buffer area around the Wal-Mart property. It's also checked on other sites just outside the area of the 2004 GWSS discovery. Survey results showed that GWSS finds, to date, were confined to the landscape

*(continued on page 2)*

## Special thanks

A special thanks to the California Table Grape Commission for its support of this newsletter.



## Kern-Tulare GWSS Update

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(continued from page 1)

make sure that emerging insects have no opportunity to escape.”

For example, each egg mass will be “sleeved” to contain emerging nymphs, if they manage to survive. Also, trucks will make direct shipments, with no other deliveries along the way.

Three nursery companies are involved in the project, each shipping to its own sister facilities in Northern California.

“Having the shipments stay within a single company simplifies communications and gives us an added level of security,” says Van Rein.

**CDFA plans to conduct the program** for a year or more, depending on results. The state agency will then decide, with input from its advisory groups, whether to make the program available to additional nurseries and counties, or make any changes or improvements to the protocols.

“If the results of the pilot project show effectiveness along the lines of Dr. Redak’s lab work, which was impressive, the department is likely to begin taking small steps toward expanding the program,” says Van Rein. “With the stakes as high as they are

with this pest, we will not be in a rush with this project, but we will take measured steps forward if the results show that the program is effective.”

CDFA designed, and will monitor, the program with help from nurseries and counties, who will put it into action.

“Ultimately, CDFA is ‘in charge’ because we are responsible for running the statewide program, but this entire program has always been seen as a model of federal/state/local/private cooperation,” says Van Rein.

Because the nursery inspection system in general depends heavily on the county agricultural commissioners, they will wield significant authority in the pilot project. They and their staff members are performing the inspection work, verifying the results, and reporting the information to CDFA and other stakeholders.

The success of the pilot program could substantially change the extensive inspection process now used to hunt for GWSS on plants at shipping and receiving nurseries. That could considerably cut inspection time, manpower and costs.

—Catherine Merlo

### Temecula growers urged to treat for GWSS

GWSS counts are on the rise in Riverside County.

Nick Toscano, project leader for the Temecula GWSS Area-wide Program, is meeting with citrus owners and managers about treating infested groves.

“Thus far, only 20 acres of citrus have been treated in Temecula, whereas we have treated almost 3,000 acres in Coachella,” Toscano says.

Because of the GWSS populations in the Temecula area, Toscano is urging growers to protect their grapes from GWSS with applications of the systemic insecticide Admire.

“Our research in Temecula valley vineyards has shown that Admire will give you three to four months of protection,” says Toscano. “The big GWSS population peaks will start to appear in about a month and last through September if not treated.”

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(continued from page 1)

plants immediately behind Wal-Mart.

The 2004 GWSS infestation was discovered within the vicinity of the Vacaville factory outlet stores, just south of Interstate 80. The California Department of Food and Agriculture and the Solano County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office have worked together closely to assure the best response to the small, localized infestation.

Cohen says her office is ready for GWSS high season. “We’re suited up and ready to wipe it out,” she said. “We’re doing everything we can to eradicate the insect as quickly as possible.”

**Agriculture officials in nearby Napa, Sonoma and Santa Clara Counties** are watching the situation closely.

“We’re not surprised more GWSS were found,” said Priscilla Lane, Sonoma County senior agricultural biologist.

“There are a lot of trees and territory to cover there. With the state’s involvement and the spray program, it appears they have it under control.”

Eric Wylde, supervising ag biologist in charge of Santa Clara County’s GWSS program, agreed. “The find was not unexpected,” he said. “You can control populations and keep GWSS from spreading, but you can’t expect to eradicate it in just one year.”

“The proximity of the Vacaville infestation, coupled with so many viable egg-mass finds this season, is a serious reminder to the wine-grape industry in Napa and Sonoma Counties that the threat is real,” says Jeff Erwin, Napa County’s deputy agricultural commissioner. “We need to remain vigilant and keep the research going to find a cure for Pierce’s Disease.”

—Catherine Merlo