

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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Report highlights state's PD, GWSS efforts

A year of "challenges and successes" in the battle against Pierce's Disease (PD) and the glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) is detailed in a recently released progress report to the California Legislature.

Produced by the Pierce's Disease Control Program (PDCP), the report is available at CDFA's Web site at <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov/phpps/pdcp/>.

The report highlights program efforts during 2004 to slow or stop the spread of GWSS while solutions to PD are developed.

"The program withstood court battles and a new urban infestation near some of the most valuable vineyards in the state," the report notes. "The courts ruled in favor of the program and its environmental impact statement."

Among the 2004 highlights noted in the report:

Contain the Spread

- Only 64 shipments of regulated plant material were rejected from some 76,700 shipments made in 2004. That's a 57 percent decrease from 2001.
- No GWSS were detected in shipments of bulk grapes in 2004, reflecting the success of the bulk grape shipping inspection and certification program.
- A single, live GWSS was found in one out of about 62,000 certified shipments of bulk citrus during the citrus shipping season (October 2003 through September 2004). The single find marks a 96 percent reduction in rejected shipments compared to the previous year.

Statewide survey and detection

- Survey efforts revealed that 35 California counties remained free of GWSS.
- A new, localized GWSS infestation was found in Vacaville in Solano County in early June 2004. Vacaville sits geographically at the doorstep of Napa, Sonoma and

Mendocino counties, where many of California's most prized vineyards are located.

Rapid response and control

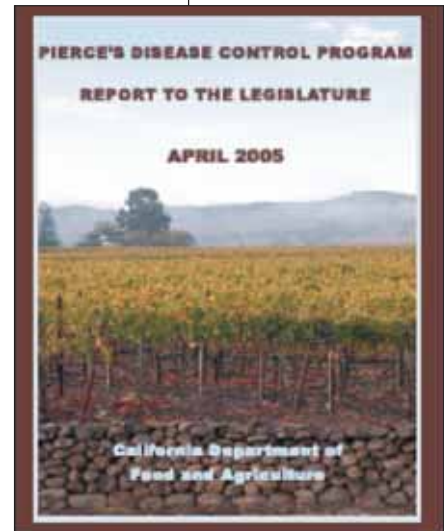
- In response to the June 2004 GWSS infestation in Vacaville, Solano County coordinated a sustained rapid response plan to eradicate the pest.

- Delimitation and treatment activities continued against isolated GWSS infestations in Butte, Fresno, Imperial, Sacramento, Santa Clara and Tulare counties. Fresno County successfully eradicated the GWSS infestation from the community of Kingsburg.

Research

- The nation's top plant health and pest researchers were engaged in 115 research projects to aid in the fight against PD and GWSS.
- The fourth annual PD Research Symposium was held in December 2004, bringing together scientists engaged in PD research projects. The symposium proceedings were published and distributed to those attending the event and were posted on the program's Web site.
- The National Academy of Sciences completed its review of past, current, and potential research activities for the development of a long-term research strategy to combat PD and its vectors. The final report, titled "California Agricultural Research Priorities: Pierce's Disease," was released in October 2004.
- Pest management pilot projects were continued in Kern, Riverside, Tulare and Ventura counties. Approximately 36,000

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The PD Control Program's Report to the Legislature describes efforts to slow or stop the spread of the sharpshooter while PD solutions are developed.

PD/GWSS Board, Task Force to meet

A joint meeting of the CDFA PD/GWSS Board and the PD Advisory Task Force will be held Nov. 7-8 at the Hyatt Regency in Monterey, Calif. The meeting is open to the general public. For more information, contact Janet LeMasters at 916-651-0253.



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acres were treated in the area-wide projects. Treatments significantly decreased GWSS populations in most of the areas.

- Scientists from CDFA and the University of California developed an effective low-cost method for growers to identify and remove diseased vines from their vineyards.

Biological control

- The CDFA has released 1.1 million parasitic wasps for GWSS control in California since 2000.

- Production of GWSS biological control agents in Kern County was relocated from Bakersfield to a site near Arvin. CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura officially opened the Arvin facility in June 2004. A second facility, Mount Rubidoux field station, is located in Riverside.

- Four species of minute parasitic wasps, each less than 1/16" long, have been permitted for release. All species attack the eggs of the GWSS. Two species are exotic to California.

- The CDFA and USDA/Agricultural Research Services (ARS) are evaluating several species of sharpshooter parasitoids from South America in quarantine conditions. These wasps are in their 27th generation of reproduction and are feeding on GWSS egg masses. Currently, no California native sharpshooter species have been affected by these wasps.

- Ongoing monitoring by CDFA at release sites have recorded over 144 separate recoveries of introduced parasitoids from field-collected eggs of the GWSS. Additional recoveries have been recorded by independent sources. The significance of recoveries show that these newly introduced parasitic wasps are surviving and thriving in California, further reducing GWSS populations.

- Exploration for potential biological control agents continues in North and South America. The PDCP biological control unit has provided plants, sharpshooters, parasitic wasps, training and expert advice to more than 15 research projects involved in the search for control strategies for *X. fastidiosa* and its GWSS vector.

Resources, funding remain critical to program's success

"The availability of resources continues to be a key challenge to the program. State funding is critical to the program's success. The federal government has recognized the importance of finding a solution to Pierce's disease by committing significant funding and has indicated it will provide future support. Industry's willingness to participate in funding has been demonstrated and is vital to the success of the program. With the ongoing cooperation and assistance of our federal and county counterparts and university and industry partners, we will continue moving closer to finding a long-term solution for this serious agricultural threat."

— Pierce's Disease Control Program Report to the Legislature, April 2005

Environmental compliance

In May 2003, the PDCP's final environmental impact report (EIR) was released and certified. The extensive, in-depth environmental review, conducted with full opportunity for public and stakeholder input, determined that program activities did not present a risk of causing significant environmental impacts.

In June 2003, a lawsuit was filed against the EIR by three environmental groups. A hearing on the lawsuit was held in San Francisco Superior Court in February 2004. On April 29, 2004, the trial court ruled in favor of the EIR and the program. In June 2004, the petitioners filed a notice of appeal against the trial court's ruling. The case is currently being adjudicated; an appeal hearing will be held in December 2005.

The PDCP is a partnership that includes the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the county agricultural commissioners, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the University of California, other state and local agencies, industry, and agricultural organizations throughout the state.

PD Research Symposium set for Dec. 5-7

The 2005 Pierce's Disease Research Symposium will be held Dec. 5-7, 2005, at the Marriott San Diego Hotel and Marina in San Diego, Calif. For more information, contact Athar Tariq at (916) 322-2804 or atariq@cdfa.ca.gov.

GWSS Update archives

Past issues of GWSS Update, going back to 2001, can be found at <http://cekern.ucdavis.edu/newsletterfiles/newsletter667.htm>.