Oct. 25, 2002

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).

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Zeroing in on GWSS infestations, control in Kern

Working on the GWSS project has resulted in many challenges and surprises. We are continually learning new behavioral patterns about his pest.

To date, the favored sites for overwintering GWSS, and its subsequent spread, have been citrus groves and urban residences. Vineyards adjacent to citrus have been the first to feel the pressure from GWSS and Pierce's disease (PD).

As we look back, Temecula was faced with citrus and grapes as the major source of GWSS. Control efforts in citrus and grapes have resulted in very low populations of GWSS the past two seasons, both in Temecula and in Kern County's General Beale Road Pilot Project.

Kern's crop diversity. In contrast with Temecula, the General Beale project and the Kern County GWSS Area-wide Management Program are much more diversified. I would guess they cover about 25,000–30,000 acres of grapes and the same in citrus. Other crops include tree fruits, almonds, blueberries, walnuts and several windbreaks, consisting of eucalyptus, beefwood, jojoba and pomegranates.

In addition, there are more rural homes and the towns of Arvin, Lamont and Bakersfield, all adding to the complexity of a control program.

Last winter, trapping indicated that increases in GWSS were occurring in an area of tree fruits in the General Beale project. It was found that they were in the top of the tree in the new growth. This potential site will have to be evaluated to determine the implications for the tree fruit acreage to the north.

Recently, the intensive trapping program has indicated GWSS populations in vineyards not adjacent to citrus. In one case in the Northern Zone of Kern's area-wide program, GWSS are present in a table grape vineyard that is 1-1/2 miles away from citrus. Several vineyards have low-level infestations of GWSS and are being treated.

From GWSS to PD. Experience has shown that a low-level infestation of GWSS can result in increased PD in one to two years, depending upon the variety. Some infestations are in wine and raisin grapes, and the growers have limited funds for a treatment program. If left uncontrolled, these vineyards will serve as a source of not only GWSS but PD as well.

New materials are being tested on grapes to maximize the number of tools available for a management program next season. These challenges not only exist today but also will become critical as GWSS spreads to new areas.

— Don Luvisi, project coordinator, GWSS Task Force of Kern Tulare counties

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Don Luvisi,
GWSS Task Force
of Kern and Tulare
counties

Inspect containers, clothing, vehicles for GWSS during citrus harvest

With the citrus harvest underway, all citrus industry personnel are urged to be aware of preventing the spread of GWSS. Consider the following guidelines.

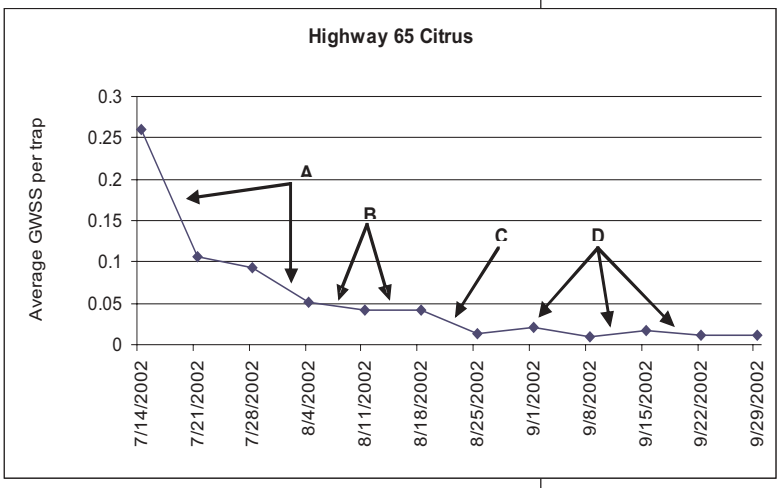
- Carefully inspect any containers of fruit distributed directly from the field to avoid moving GWSS.
- Brush off clothing prior to leaving an infested orchard.
- Look for GWSS hitchhikers in autos and on windshields after visiting infested plantings. If GWSS are present, kill them or, at a minimum, remove them from the vehicle prior to travel.

— Citrus Research Board

CDFA shares Highway 65 data of GWSS in citrus

Since early July 2002, CDFA personnel have been monitoring GWSS populations using a new bar code scanner system. This system is used to collect and compile all CDFA trap data in Kern County. The Kern County Agricultural Commissioner will soon implement the same system.

The graph at right shows population trends in citrus crops within the Highway 65 area of Kern County. This is the area north of Seventh Standard Road, south of the Tulare-Kern County line and east of the Famoso Porterville Highway.



- (A) The graph displays a noticeable GWSS reduction between mid July and early August. This decrease can most likely be attributed to the chemical treatments in the three Kern County designated infested areas along Highway 65. Most treatments were applied between early June to mid July 2002. The foliar chemical Baythroid and the systemic chemical Admire account for the majority of these treatments.
- (B) Between early and mid August, GWSS populations leveled out, but, between mid and late August, another noticeable decrease in populations is seen, indicated by (C).
- The small decrease indicated in area (C) coincides with buffer treatments to citrus in this area. Buffer treatments consisted of a quarter-mile border treatment applied to citrus adjacent to grape vineyards. Growers used several different chemicals on their buffer treatments. Lannate and Baythroid were the two most commonly applied chemicals, but Assail and Dimethoate were also used.
- (D) Populations remain low.

Data collection is critical to the success of the GWSS/PD program, and CDFA will continue to monitor and share accurate GWSS population data from within their project areas.

— David Elms, CDFA