



Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program

Asian Citrus Psyllid: A Death Sentence for Your Community's Citrus

Overview

The Asian citrus psyllid, which has been found throughout Southern California since 2008, can carry one of the most devastating citrus diseases in the world – Huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening disease. The citrus industry is waging a war to save California's citrus after HLB was discovered in a residential area of Los Angeles in 2012.

While not harmful to human health, HLB is fatal to citrus trees and threatens the state's \$2 billion industry. Trees infected with HLB will produce bitter, hard and misshapen fruit, and ultimately die.

The economic consequences of the Asian citrus psyllid and HLB in California could be staggering. For example, a January 2012 study by the University of Florida indicated the Florida economy has suffered an estimated \$3.63 billion in lost revenues and 6,611 jobs due to this devastating pest and the disease it can spread. Based on the lessons learned in Florida, one of the best ways to protect against HLB is to control the spread of the pest.

The Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program is determined to prevent Florida's citrus epidemic from happening in California. As such, the Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program wants to ensure government officials are informed about the issue and are prepared to answer questions from residents and/or direct them to accurate sources of information. The best source for immediate information is CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org.

Citrus Industry and Government Action

California's citrus industry has been working closely with federal, state and local officials to detect and suppress the spread of the Asian citrus psyllid and HLB.

- In 2009, AB 281 (De Leon) established the Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC), an industry-funded program to assist in combating citrus-specific diseases, vectors and pests, when found in California.
- At the December 2011 CPDPC meeting, members of the body adopted a plan that establishes an aggressive buffer detection and treatment program around the Asian citrus psyllid population in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area. The goal of this plan is to prevent HLB and the psyllid from spreading into commercial citrus producing regions in our state.

- A major public outreach campaign involving state and federal entities and the citrus industry is taking place throughout California. Citizens are being asked to inspect their citrus trees monthly and if the Asian citrus psyllid is found, contact the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) hotline at **1-800-491-1899**.
- Mitigation steps, such as quarantine or restricted area designations and treatment programs, are being employed in high-priority areas where the Asian citrus psyllid is detected.
- CDFA is placing traps around California in residential areas to detect and react to the spread of the Asian citrus psyllid and HLB. Should a psyllid be found in a residential tree within high-priority areas, CDFA will treat the tree and surrounding trees in the area. If HLB is detected, the tree must be removed so psyllids cannot transmit the disease to nearby trees.
- The citrus industry, the United States Department of Agriculture and CDFA are working together to suppress the spread of the psyllid and will continue efforts to save California's \$2 billion citrus industry and 14,000 jobs.

What Elected Officials can do About the Spread of the Asian Citrus Psyllid and HLB: Keep Constituents Informed

- Add the Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program link to your website:
 - English – CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org
 - Spanish – PeligranCitricosEnCalifornia.com
- Provide Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program education materials at city hall and other locations where residents can access information, such as farmer's markets.
- Send out Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program Asian citrus psyllid and HLB information to email distribution lists and include it in newsletters.
- Stay informed – Follow the Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program on Facebook and Twitter, and share important updates with constituents.
 - [Twitter.com/CitrusThreat](https://twitter.com/CitrusThreat)
 - [Facebook.com/CaliforniaCitrusThreat](https://facebook.com/CaliforniaCitrusThreat)

- Run the Asian citrus psyllid awareness Public Service Announcement (PSA) on your city or county television network, or upload to your YouTube account. Please contact Katie Rowland at (619) 296-0605 or kr@nstpr.com to obtain the PSA.

What can Residents do to Protect Their Citrus Trees?

Residents can help save backyard citrus in California by following these important tips:

- **Don't move citrus** — Do not move citrus plants, plant material or fruit in or out of quarantine areas, or across state or international borders.
- **Inspect your trees** — Inspect your citrus trees monthly, and whenever watering, spraying, pruning or tending trees, for signs of HLB and the psyllid.
- **Plant responsibly** — Plant trees from reputable, licensed California nurseries.
- **Talk to your local nursery** — Ask about products that are available to help stop the Asian citrus psyllid.
- **Graft with care** — Use only registered budwood that comes with source documentation.
- **Be mindful of clippings** — Dry or double bag plant clippings prior to disposal to avoid moving psyllids and HLB-infected plant materials.
- **Cooperate** — Cooperate with agriculture officials on detection and suppression efforts of the Asian citrus psyllid and HLB.