Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture

Growing Times

November 2014

US Customs & Border Protection

Protecting Agriculture by monitoring travelers

Santa Clara County had a unique experience this past summer riding along with Customs and Border Protection Officials at the San Francisco International Airport. Biologists got to see firsthand the amount of produce, plants, and food products seized by agents on a daily basis. The mountain of seized contraband was sobering.

Invasives continue to be a big problem in Santa Clara County and across the entire state. Invasives are being brought into our area at an alarming rate and there is only so much a handful of officials can do. Please remind friends and family you know are traveling not to bring any plants, seeds, fruits, vegetables, or meat products back with them. To read an interesting article on the subject, click on this bon appétit article:
http://www.bonappetit.com/entertaining-style/trends-news/article/customs-food

In this issue:

- Santa Clara County Crop Report
- On-Line Pesticide Use Reporting
- Bagrada Bug
- Brown Marmorated Stink Bug
- Second Generation Rodenticides become California Restricted Materials
- Asian Citrus Psyllid

On-Line Continuing Education Site for Growers

Fresno County & UC ANR

If you are unable to join us for our continuing education seminar or are in need of additional hours of continuing education to renew your private applicator certificate, you can take some free continuing education courses by visiting this Fresno County website:

http://www2.co.fresno.ca.us/4010/agce/agceinfo/home.aspx

You will need to register on the site and be sure to save your completion notice so you can bring it in when you renew your private applicator certificate. (This is a timed course and there is a delay between slides. Don't get discouraged if the arrow to advance to the next slide is not available. – It will appear after about 40 seconds.)

Another free course we have heard about is one hosted by the University Cooperative Extension concerning food safety and sustainability.

Cover crops can attract beneficial insects, help control soil erosion and improve soil quality, but may attract wildlife, which can pose a health threat to certain crops. In this free on-line course, the University of California Extension shows food safety auditors and growers talking about strategies for minimizing the potential risks of crops being contaminated by animal feces.

To get to the on-line course, you can type: "UC Food Safety and Sustainability" into a web browser, or you can click on this link:
http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/Preharvest/Co-Management_of_Food_Safety_and_Sustainability/Free_Online_Course__Balancing_Food_Safety_and_Sustainability_%E2%80%93_Opportunities_for_Co-Management_/

Santa Clara County Crop Report

We need your help!

Whether large or small, it's important to include your agriculture information in our annual crop report! It helps our department, County and City officials, the State Department of Agriculture, research institutions, schools, banks, and other agencies evaluate and plan for a number of topics concerning agriculture. This information is also used during natural disasters, like a drought, hail storm, flooding, fire, etc to help growers qualify for low-cost government loans or assistance.

County crop reports are unique due to the vast differences found in each of the 58 counties across the state. Each area varies in climate and crop production capabilities, suited to produce as many as 400 different commodities. Due to the complexities of gathering crop report information, the California Food and Agriculture Code states that the Commissioner must compile reports of the condition, acreage, production, and value of the agricultural products in each county each year.

How safe is the information I provide?

Because crop report information is so valuable and can contain sensitive information, crop report information is provided special status and cannot be queried or subject of a public information request. The information you provide is kept confidential and will not be disclosed to any other government or private entity.

Getting prepared for 2014

The Santa Clara County Agricultural Commissioner's office is preparing to gather statistics for the 2014 annual crop report. You will be receiving a letter in the mail asking for your participation. Please complete the requested information and return to Lori Oleson or your district biologist.

You can view past crop reports on the Division of Agriculture's website at sccagriculture.org. Click on crop reports in the upper left corner. We have crop reports going back as far as 1940!

If you have any questions, please call Lori Oleson at (408) 201-0643. Thank you!

On-Line Pesticide Use Reporting

If you have access to the Internet, please consider reporting on-line!

DPR recently published a "ranking" of on-line pesticide use reporting by County. Santa Clara County is at 26%! We have set our goals to move Santa Clara County higher in the list in 2015, so please help us out if you haven't signed up to report on-line!

Excerpt taken from the list:

County	Number of lines on use reports	% reported electronically
San Benito	45,763	89%
Monterey	477,281	85%
Napa	55,637	77%
Santa Cruz	37,246	54%
Alameda	28,839	52%
San Mateo	21,230	51%
Santa Clara	**57,556**	**26%**
Contra Costa	26,454	24%
Grand Total For the State	3,456,629	61%

If you would like to do away with postage and running to the post office by the 10th of every month; consider electronically posting your use report! It will also help us reduce the cost of inputting all of this information into the State database!

We've been told that there are several new third party software providers who have completed pesticide use report submission interfaces with the State use reporting system this year, so hopefully it will be even easier to report!

We will personally help you set up your on-line reporting. Call today to set up your FREE appointment with our On-Line Use Reporting expert. We will set you up with a log in name, password, and details of how to submit your monthly use reports.

For information about on-line pesticide use reporting, please contact biologist Kristian Barbeau at: Kristian.Barbeau@aem.sccgov.org Or you can reach him at: (408) 201-0650

Bagrada Bug

Another new invasive discovered in Santa Clara County

The Bagrada bug, ***Bagrada hilaris***, is an invasive stink bug that was first found in California in Los Angeles County in 2008. It has since become widely distributed in Southern California and it has now unfortunately spread to northern California. Our office started getting phone calls about infestations in agriculture and home gardens this past summer.

The Bagrada bug is a major pest of cole crops and plants in the mustard family. The bugs have piercing sucking mouthparts and their feeding causes wilted or stippled leaves which can make brassica leafy greens, like bok choy, unmarketable. Feeding on young seedlings causes stunted growth and even death. In broccoli and cauliflower feeding at the growth terminal can cause branching and production of multiple, smaller heads.

Bagrada bugs are black shield-shaped bugs with orange and white markings. They are typically 5-7 mm long. Females lay small clusters of barrel-shaped eggs on the underside of leaves or in the soil. One female can lay up to 10 eggs a day and populations can increase rapidly with multiple generations per year.

In conventionally grown crops insecticides applied to seedlings and transplants can provide short term protection. With higher infestations, rotation between pesticide groups is very important to prevent resistance with this highly reproductive species. Organic growers are having a harder time getting significant control with organic pesticides. Gardeners are encouraged to remove host plants such as alyssum and plants in the mustard family.

For more information visit these sites:
http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/EXOTIC/bagradabuginag.html
http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74166.html

This picture was taken by a farm advisor showing bagrada bug damage on bok choy.

Brown Marmorated Stink Bug

A new pest invading San Jose

Since it set feet in Pennsylvania in the mid-1990s, the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB), ***Halyomorpha halys,*** has spread to more than 41 states. Unfortunately, this pest is now calling San Jose home. Originally from Eastern Asia, the BMSB has become a significant economic agricultural pest in five mid–Atlantic states, causing millions of dollars of damage to over 150 susceptible crops. This could mean significant losses to California multi-billion dollar fruit, vegetable, and nursery industry.

BMSB can damage fruit (apples, pears, citrus, and stone fruits), berries, grapes, vegetable (tomato and pepper), legumes and ornamentals. Fruit is most affected by this pest, the BMSB inserts a piercing-sucking mouthparts, which leave pock marks and distortions that make the fruit unmarketable. Also, the flesh under the feeding site becomes corked or mealy.

BMSB is distinctive from other native stink bugs by the white bands visible on the antennae and legs. The eggs are white, barrel shaped and laid in clusters of 20-30 on the undersides of leaves. There are 5 nymphal stages. In the fall adults seek shelter to overwinter, they look for shelter in tight, dry spaces. Plant material, packing material, pallets, undersides of trucks warehouses and attics all make great shelter. Adults will emerge in spring as temperatures increase.

This pest is also a nuisance to residents. We have heard reports of this stink bug entering houses by the thousands. Although they do not bite, sting, or spread diseases, as their namesake states, they can create quite a stink. -Especially if they are crushed. We have received a number of calls this fall from residents in the San Jose area where there appears to be several new infestations.

Please monitor for this new pest in your orchards, vineyards and fields and notify the Agricultural Commissioner's Office if you are finding insects and damage.
For more information, please visit the University of California website:
http://ucipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn74169.html

Second Generation Rodenticides become California Restricted Materials

Excerpts taken from a Department of Pesticide Regulation publication and Enforcement Letter 14-14

Effective July 1, 2014, the 2nd generation rodenticides (SGARS) brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum, and difethialone were added to 3CCR section 6400 as California restricted materials. Section 6471 was also added to supplement label restrictions by prohibiting placement of above-ground bait more than 50 feet from a man-made structure with some exceptions.

What types of uses are on the currently registered SGAR product labeling?

These products are labeled only for control of three rodent species (Norway rats, roof rats, and house mice) in and around buildings and other man-made structures as defined by the product label.

SGAR labels explicitly prohibit use against any other pest species. DPR has determined that SGAR products are not labeled for controlling ornamental, plant, or turf pests.

Who may purchase and use these products?

These products may only be purchased and used by certified commercial applicators and certified private applicators producing an agricultural commodity or those under their direct supervision.

What are some examples of the phrase used in 3CCR Section 6471: "a feature associated with the site that is harboring or attracting the pests targeted"?

Such features potentially could include any harborage (such as dense vegetation or debris) or any attractive resource (such as a source of food or water). The key consideration is that the feature must be both: currently harboring or attracting one of the three rodent species listed on SGAR labeling, and the "feature" is located more than 50 feet from the man-made structure, but less than the placement limit specified on the label (which is up to 100 feet on some SGAR labels).

Asian Citrus Psyllid

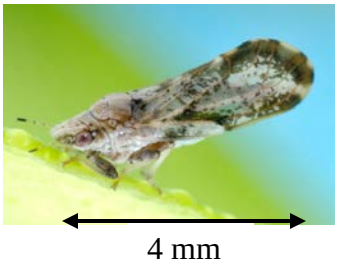

Photo by Jeffrey Lotz, FDACS-Division of Plant Industry

In October 2014, The State Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) detected an infestation of Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) in San Jose near Kelly Park. This is the first detection of ACP in Santa Clara County and the Bay Area. The ACP were detected in a residential neighborhood near Phelan Avenue and Roberts Avenue in San Jose.

ACP is an invasive species of grave concern because it can carry the disease huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening. All citrus and closely related species are susceptible hosts for both the insect and the disease. There is no cure once a tree becomes infected, the diseased tree will decline in health and produce bitter, misshaped fruit until it dies. HLB has been detected just once in California – in 2012 on a single residential property in Hacienda Heights, Los Angeles County. That tree was destroyed and thankfully, after an extensive survey no other citrus in the area showed signs of the disease.

This insect and disease endangers not only our commercial citrus industry, but also our backyard gardens. If ACP spreads all across California, an introduction of HLB anywhere can spread like wildfire and we will no longer be able to have citrus in our backyard gardens.

What can you do to help?

We are asking everyone to inspect citrus trees on your property and if you should spot an insect that matches ACP, please catch the insect and call us! If you or any friends notice their citrus tree is looking sick and producing green misshapen bitter fruit, don't touch the tree and call our office or the State Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899.

HLB can easily be carried into California on citrus plants or cuttings. Please do not use budwood or purchase trees that aren't from a certified disease-free source like a licensed nursery!

For more information about the pest and the disease, please visit: www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/acp