



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MEASUREMENT STANDARDS

Ruben J. Arroyo
Agricultural Commissioner
Sealer of Weights and Measures

1001 South Mount Vernon Avenue · Bakersfield, California 93307
Telephone 661-868-6300 · Fax 661-868-6301 · agcomm@co.kern.ca.us

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID DETECTED IN CITY OF BAKERSFIELD, KERN COUNTY

BAKERSFIELD, April 30, 2015 – The Kern County Agricultural Commissioner, in cooperation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture has begun an extensive survey and treatment program in response to the detection of an Asian citrus psyllid in the city of Bakersfield in Kern County.

One female Asian citrus psyllid was confirmed on April 21, 2015 from a trap in a citrus tree in the Westchester area of Bakersfield. On April 22, 2015 a visual survey was begun on all properties within a nine (9) square mile area surrounding the initial find. In conjunction with this survey, additional delimitation traps have been placed throughout this same area. Placement of 285 traps was completed on April 25. Visual surveys are ongoing and once completed, a treatment program will be carried out on all citrus host plants within 800 meters surrounding the site where the insect was trapped. Residents in the treatment area will be notified in advance.

The pest is of concern because it can carry the plant disease huanglongbing (HLB). 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, misshapen fruit until it dies. To date, HLB has only been detected in one backyard tree and one psyllid in the Hacienda Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles County.

Florida biologists first detected the pest in 1998 and the disease in 2005. The two have now been detected in all 30 citrus producing counties in Florida. The pest and disease are also present in Louisiana, Georgia, South Carolina, and Texas. Biologists in Mississippi, Arizona, and Alabama have detected the pest but not the disease.

Residents in the area who think they may have seen the pest are urged to call the Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899. For more information on the Asian citrus psyllid and huanglongbing disease visit:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/acp/>.

We will keep you posted with any additional developments including public meeting dates when they are established by Cdfa and our office. If you have any questions, please call the Kern County Department of Agriculture/Measurement Standards at 661-868-6300.