



Citrus Pest & Disease Prevention Program

CDFA INSPECTING CITRUS TREES IN SAN GABRIEL VALLEY AFTER DETECTING MORE TREES INFECTED WITH HUANGLONGBING

Agricultural specialists are working to protect citrus trees in residential areas

SAN GABRIEL, Calif. – April 11, 2016 – A total of 18 citrus trees in San Gabriel have tested positive for Huanglongbing, a plant disease that kills citrus trees and has no cure. Trained specialists from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) are working to prevent the disease's spread by surveying residential properties in the area, treating citrus trees and removing infected plants.

Huanglongbing, also known as HLB, citrus greening disease and yellow dragon disease, is fatal for citrus trees. Once a tree is infected, it will decline in health and die. HLB-infected trees have leaves that appear blotchy and yellow, and bear small, asymmetrical fruit which are partially green and bitter. The Asian citrus psyllid is a pest that carries and spreads the disease as it feeds on the citrus leaves and stems. To stop this pest and disease from spreading, the CDFA is operating a free, public program to slow down spread of the pest and quickly eradicate the disease if it is found.

“Once a citrus tree is infected with Huanglongbing, it serves as a reservoir for disease and puts nearby citrus trees at risk, which is why it is important to quickly remove diseased trees when they are identified,” said Victoria Hornbaker, citrus program manager with the California Department of Food and Agriculture. “It is important we all work together for the greater good of preserving healthy citrus trees in the community and throughout California.”

CDFA is urging residents to allow agriculture specialists to inspect the citrus trees on your property. They will have a badge indicating their affiliation with the CDFA or a uniform shirt and patch clearly stating “Department of Agriculture” or “State Agriculture”. Agriculture officials will never ask for any personal information or to access the inside of your home, and are focused on protecting your citrus trees with great care. Here are some of the tasks these specialists will perform:

- *Placing an insect trap in your citrus tree to capture Asian citrus psyllids.* These traps may be in place for weeks or months, do not require any special care and are not harmful to children or pets.
- *Inspecting your citrus trees to look for Asian citrus psyllids or signs of HLB.* If the agriculture officials see Asian citrus psyllids in your tree, they may take samples of the tree leaves back to a lab to see if HLB is present. HLB is not harmful to humans or animals, but is devastating citrus trees around the world.
- *Treating your citrus plants with a free residential treatment program.* There are two methods of protecting a tree against the Asian citrus psyllid, one method is a foliar application to citrus tree leaves to provide instant protection against the pests; the second method is a soil application which provides long-term protection. Residents will be notified before and after the treatment.
- *Removing infected citrus trees.* If a citrus tree is confirmed and tested positive for HLB, the tree must be removed from the environment to prevent the disease from spreading. This tree removal is done at no cost to

the tree owners, and agriculture crews will work quickly to protect other trees nearby.

Residents are also asked to inspect the citrus trees on their property regularly. Photos of disease symptoms are available at CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org and a free hotline has been set up to report potential signs of the disease: 800-491-1899. Early detection of the disease will help protect other trees nearby and the community's citrus as a whole. For more information on Huanglongbing and how to protect California citrus trees, visit CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org

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