



# BENEFICIAL WASPS HELP FIGHT AGAINST DEADLY CITRUS TREE DISEASE

As the deadly citrus tree disease, Huanglongbing (HLB) continues to threaten California's beloved citrus crop, a small, but mighty predator called *Tamarixia radiata* – a parasitic wasp – has been called upon to help. Thousands of these beneficial wasps are being released throughout the state to reduce populations of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) – the pest that can spread HLB.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) employs a variety of tools to combat HLB to protect California's commercial and backyard citrus. Deploying *Tamarixia radiata* is a unique way of targeting ACP in urban areas, as the insect only attacks psyllids, so no other insects are affected. To date, more than 4 million of these natural predator wasps have been released in California to reduce the ACP populations.

HLB has been found in more than 2,000 residential citrus trees in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

For *Tamarixia* to be effective, ant control is critical. Do your part by placing ant bait – not spray – around your citrus trees and controlling ants throughout your yard. Your local nursery or home and garden center can provide recommendations on ant bait.

While effective at reducing ACP populations, the *Tamarixia* biological control will not stop HLB on its own. There are many other activities in place — like quarantines, treatment and tree removal — that also help prevent the spread of the disease.

Additional support from the community is critical to stopping the spread of HLB. If you have a citrus tree on your property, you should inspect your trees regularly and immediately report any suspected ACP presence and HLB symptoms to CDFA or your county agricultural commissioner. For more tips on how to care for your citrus trees, consult your local [University of California Extension](#) or a [UC Master Gardener program](#) to learn about recommended products you can use to protect your trees. By doing your part and working together, we can save California citrus.

Visit: [CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org](http://CaliforniaCitrusThreat.org) to learn more.

