

MONDAY MARCH 12, 2007

BULLETIN



Tough Border Inspections Remain In Place

CDFA Inspection Net Catches Pests in Wholesale and Retail Markets

Los Angeles County Agriculture Commissioner Kurt Floren reported Friday that six lots of Mexican avocados (about 617 cartons) were taken off the L.A. wholesale market after tentative species identifications by County Entomologists indicated actionable scale insects were present. As of noon today (Monday 3-12-07) CDFA has confirmed the County's findings for four of the six lots which have now been scheduled for fumigation. An additional 350 cartons were put on hold pending confirmation of preliminary species identifications.

CDFA works cooperatively with county agriculture officials to implement its "Interior Detection Program" to make sure all commercial products entering the state are in compliance with state quarantine laws and regulations. From the first day scale insects were found at BORDER CHECKPOINTS in February, CDFA and CAC have been communicating closely with county agriculture officials who have been checking Mexican avocados for pests at WHOLESALE & RETAIL MARKETS. When appropriate, cartons found to be infested in that channel are "red-tagged."

Commissioner Floren told CAC on Friday that "we're on it and all of our inspectors are well aware of the scale issue." In addition, he said more inspectors are being added to cover wholesale and retail markets on Saturdays. Similar assurances have been received from agriculture officials in other California counties.

Interception of pests at points of entry on the state's border is California's primary defense against the introduction and spread of invasive species. Trucks carrying Mexican avocados continue to be inspected at CDFA checkpoints as they enter the state.

From the beginning, though much of our work then was "behind the scenes," CAC has managed this issue with all of its resources, experience, and energy. We'll keep you posted as new developments warrant.



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