



COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
**Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **TRAPPING BEGINS TO DETERMINE IF INVASIVE GRAPEVINE MOTH AND CITRUS PEST HAS ARRIVED INTO SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**

San Luis Obispo, CA, March 8, 2010 --- The detection of the European Grapevine Moth and the Asian Citrus Psyllid, in parts of California, has triggered a federally funded, massive statewide trapping survey by the California Department of Food and Agriculture to determine just how wide spread these insects are. Both pests are of concern to federal and state government agencies and could have significant impact on local producers' ability to ship ag products out of California.

To date, neither pest has been found in San Luis Obispo County. 2300 insect traps, scheduled to be placed this spring in local vineyards and urban neighborhoods, will help determine if the pests have arrived. Staff from the San Luis Obispo County Department of Agriculture, working collaboratively with staff from the California Department of Food and Agriculture will be seeking cooperation from commercial growers and the public to gain access to trees and vines to hang insect traps containing pheromones and sticky surfaces that specifically attract and hold these insects.

The European Grapevine Moth, detected in Napa County in 2009, native to Italy, poses a significant threat to the local grape industry, valued at over \$124 million in 2008. The caterpillar life stage of the moth eats the flowers and grape bunches. The fruit of olive, cherry, other trees and blackberries are also favorite food for the caterpillar. Traps will be placed in vineyards this spring to determine if the insect is present.

The Asian Citrus Psyllid, a tiny insect native to tropical Asia and found in South and Central America, Mexico and parts of the US, can carry and spread Huanglongbing disease, also known as Citrus Greening Disease, which is fatal to most species of citrus trees. Citrus Greening Disease has had a devastating impact on the citrus industry in Florida and other citrus growing regions of the US.

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To date, the insect, not the disease, has been found in 6 southern California counties: Imperial, Riverside, San Diego, San Bernardino, Los Angeles and Orange, causing quarantine restrictions on the movement of citrus plants originating from these counties. This pest could potentially destroy the county's lemon and orange industry, valued at over \$14 million in 2008.

“No one knows how these pests entered into California”, stated Bob Lilley, Agricultural Commissioner. “If they are here, the hope is we will have small populations in limited areas so they can be quickly brought under control”, he continued. Future plans to manage these pests will be developed by the California Department of Food and Agriculture based upon the results of the statewide trapping survey. Local trapping results should be available by July, 2010 for the European Grapevine Moth and October, 2010 for the Asian Citrus Psyllid.

For more information visit the California Department of Food and Agriculture website at [www.cdfa.ca.gov](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov) or the County Ag Commissioner's website at [www.slocounty.ca.gov/agcomm](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/agcomm).

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