

Response to the 2010 Glassy-winged Sharpshooter Discovery

Provided by the San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's Office



In September, five adult Glassy-winged sharpshooters were detected by the County Agricultural Commissioner's office within the city of San Luis Obispo. The infestation has been determined to occur in a two block radius within the south-east corner of the city. The Glassy-winged sharpshooter is capable of transmitting *Xylella fastidiosa*, a bacterium that causes Pierce's Disease which is lethal to grape vines.

What actions are being taken to protect the grape industry?

- A door to door visual survey of over 500 residential sites was conducted by the County Agricultural Commissioner's office to determine the extent of the pest population.
- One hundred yellow sticky panel traps were set up within 1 square mile of the original find site, and an additional 200 traps will be placed within this area by mid-October.
- Several species of *Gonatocerus*, a parasitoid of Glassy-winged sharpshooter, were released on October 6th.
- Beginning in February 2011, a soil drench systemic application of Merit 75 WSP will be applied to host material within the residential areas of the determined pest infestation.

Why is a contact insecticidal spray not being applied immediately?

- A "knock down," contact insecticide is not being considered at this time as the adult populations are low, and those that are present are overwintering in leaf litter and in protected areas such as under bark.
- A contact spray application applied to the foliage of host plants would pose a greater risk of conflict with the public.

Why is the county waiting so long to apply pesticides?

- The Glassy-winged sharpshooter overwinters in the adult form, and is mostly inactive until late February at which point they begin to mate and lay eggs. A systemic pesticide application would be wasted if the adults were not active.
- Merit 75 WSP is a systemic pesticide and would not be translocated as effectively within the host plant until temperatures rise and active growth begins to occur. Fall and winter rainfall could also lead to leaching of the soil applied pesticide. The treatment will remain active within the plant for up to 8 months.
- Public reaction is critical and can be the difference between success or failure of this treatment. Adequate time will need to be given to educate and reassure the public of the safety of the treatment method. Additionally, permission needs to be granted in order to apply pesticides to private property.

What can the grape industry do to protect themselves?

- Familiarize yourself and your workers with the life stages and signs of the Glassy-winged sharpshooter. Information is available in Spanish and English at the County Agricultural Commissioner's office and at the UC Cooperative Extension. Additional information can be found at these websites: <http://gwss.ucanr.org/>, <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7492.html>, and http://www.cdca.ca.gov/pdcp/Glassy-winged_Sharpsooter.html.
- Continue to have the County Agricultural Commissioner's office inspect plant shipments from other counties.