



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

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PRESS RELEASE

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STATE REGULATIONS APPROVED FOR THE ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE AND EMERALD ASH BORER

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PRESS RELEASE: State regulations approved for the Asian longhorned beetle and Emerald ash borer

New Haven, Connecticut, March 31, 2010 – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) announced that state regulations have been approved to establish guidelines for survey, quarantines restricting the movement of regulated articles, and eradication of the Asian longhorned beetle and emerald ash borer, two very destructive exotic insect pests of hardwood trees. The director of the CAES is the chief plant regulatory official in Connecticut.

Although these insect pests have not yet been detected in Connecticut, they are spreading in other states. Louis Magnarelli, Director of the CAES, said that “it is very important for us to prepare for infestations of these insects. Both insect pests destroy a wide range of hardwood tree species, many of which are important for the nursery trade, furniture production, building materials, maple syrup production, enhancing tourism, and environmental quality.”

The Asian longhorned beetle attacks maple, birch, elm, willow, and chestnut trees. It was first detected in New York City in 1996, but other infestations occurred in Long Island; Chicago; New Jersey; Toronto, Canada; and Worcester, Massachusetts. Although this insect pest has been eradicated in Chicago and Jersey City, New Jersey, tree removal continues in other sites. The infestation in Worcester is extensive, covering at least 74 square miles. More than 26,000 trees have been cut and chipped thus far. The southern edge of the Worcester infestation is about 13.25 miles from the Connecticut border.

The Emerald ash borer, another insect native to Asia, attacks several species of ash trees and has great dispersal potential. This pest has been detected in 13 states in midwestern and eastern United States and in Ontario and Quebec, Canada.

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Early detection of either insect pest is of paramount importance in preventing widespread infestations. Director Magnarelli said that “there has been an intensive campaign to educate arborists and other state residents on the risks of moving firewood. This activity can rapidly spread these insects to multiple locations, thereby establishing infestations in residential as well as camping areas in or near forests. There is great potential for economic losses and environmental damage if either insect pest goes undetected for extended periods of time.”

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