



SF Environment

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CDFA 2007-08 Light Brown Apple Moth Action Plan

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- The Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) is an invasive species from Australasia that attacks hundreds of plant species, including many agricultural crops. The big picture of the problem clearly shows the value of an eradication effort in terms of total pesticide pollution and public health concerns *averted*. There is also a big economic factor at stake with regard to our ability to export to Canada and Mexico.
- It is unclear whether an eradication—rather than suppression—goal is really achievable. The decision to eradicate rests with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).
- The CDFA presented data on the origins and transport of the pest suggesting that treatments in San Francisco are appropriate. However, CDFA underestimated public concern over aerial spraying in Santa Cruz and Monterey.
- CDFA has pursued a good-faith effort to find the least-hazardous solution to the problem, including requirements for new pheromone product formulations. Some environmental organizations (NRDC) and organic growers are supporting the CDFA effort, or are supporting it with reservations.
- The spray contains ingredients that can be respiratory irritants, but only at very high exposure levels. Because a new formulation of the pheromone product is currently being developed, we will not know its exact chemical composition until May 2008. The spraying would likely be scheduled for August 2008 for San Francisco.
- San Francisco Department of the Environment believes that aerial spraying should be avoided whenever possible over urban areas. In this case, because the goal of eradication is unlikely to be achieved, other options should be explored first, such as:
 - Ground applications of the pheromone product
 - Bait-and-trap control techniques, or
 - Targeted ground applications of a least toxic pesticide.
- In addition, state and federal authorities should increase their research efforts to find insect natural enemies that can provide permanent, safe suppression of LBAM should it become established in California.