

 **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Nolan Lemon (919) 855-7008
Andrea McNally (301) 734-0602

USDA ISSUES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR CITRUS GREENING AND ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is seeking public comments on an environmental assessment (EA) that evaluates proposed measures to control the spread of citrus greening (CG) and Asian citrus psyllid (ACP).

In an effort to prevent the spread of these citrus pests, APHIS is proposing that commercial nurseries within ACP-quarantined areas meet certain requirements in order for those nurseries to ship ACP-regulated articles interstate. The proposed requirements include but are not limited to: soil drenches, in-ground granular treatments, foliar treatments, fumigation and mandatory labeling to alert consumers of federal movement restrictions of regulated citrus products, among others. Areas quarantined because of CG, would not be eligible to ship regulated citrus products outside of quarantined areas except for immediate export out of the country. The majority of these proposed measures are derived from a July 29 Federal Order for CG and ACP.

Also known as huanglongbing, CG is one of the most serious citrus diseases in the world. The ACP is the primary insect vector that spreads CG from infected trees to healthy trees as the insect feeds on a plant. Currently, the entire states of Florida and Georgia, as well as portions of Louisiana and South Carolina, are quarantined for CG. All of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Guam, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Puerto Rico and Texas, as well as portions of California and South Carolina, are under quarantine for ACP.

The EA was published in the Sept. 9 *Federal Register*.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or Nov. 9. Send two copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2008-0015, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. APHIS-2008-0015. If you wish to submit a comment using the Internet go to the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2008-0015>.

Comments are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be viewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS news release page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom>. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type `subscribe press_releases`.