Finding of No Significant Impact for
Movement of Regulated Articles from Citrus Greening
and
Asian Citrus Psyllid Quarantine Zones
Environmental Assessment
October 2007

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) that analyzes potential environmental consequences from the movement of regulated articles from citrus greening (CG) and Asian citrus psyllid (ACP) quarantine zones. CG is considered to be one of the most serious citrus diseases in the world. It attacks the vascular system of plants greatly reducing production, destroys the economic value of the fruit, and can kill trees. Once infected, there is no cure for a tree with CG disease. The EA, incorporated by reference in this document, is available from:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Plant Protection and Quarantine
Emergency and Domestic Programs
Emergency Management
4700 River Road, Unit 134
Riverdale, MD 20737–1236

APHIS is responsible for taking actions to exclude, eradicate, and/or control plant pests under the Plant Protection Act (7 United States Code 7701 et seq.). Therefore, it is important that APHIS take the steps necessary to prevent the movement of CG and ACP from the quarantine areas. Due to the serious and destructive nature of CG disease, it is necessary to expand the number of counties in Florida from which the movement of plants that are hosts of CG is present in order to prevent the further spread and infestation. It is also necessary to expand the areas quarantined due to the presence of ACP so that host plants can be treated and inspected before being moved interstate.

The EA analyzed two alternatives: (1) no action (maintaining the existing Federal quarantine order without further action by APHIS); and (2) expanding the Federal order to include 28 counties in Florida to the CG-quarantine area, and establishing an ACP-quarantine area to include the entire States of Florida and Hawaii, the Territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and several counties in Texas. No CG-host material may be moved from the CG-quarantine area. The Federal order requires that any regulated article, except for curry leaves, must be treated with a drench containing imidaclorprid as the active ingredient 30 days prior to movement, and must be treated with a foliar spray containing acetamiprid, chlorpyrifos, or fenpropathrin as the active ingredient 10 days prior to movement. In addition, the regulated article must be found free of ACP within 72 hours before movement, and must be accompanied by a limited permit. The movement of curry leaf requires fumigation with methyl bromide.

The EA analyzed the environmental effects of the addition of the quarantine areas and how that would increase the use of chemical treatments of imidaclorpid, acetamiprid, chlorpyrifos, and fenpropathrin. The expansion to 28 counties in Florida for the CG-quarantine area and the inclusion of several States and territories in an ACP-quarantine area will not result in a

substantial increase in the use of these chemicals because the number of nurseries that would move any regulated articles, under the Federal order, is believed to be less than 10 nurseries.

In addition, the program use of chemical treatments will be limited to the nursery. Only individuals who work in the nursery or the occupational workers will be exposed to the chemicals. Protective gear and safety precautions required by the label and standard operating procedures are designed to ensure that no adverse effects to program workers will be expected. The EA concluded that the use of these treatments is unlikely to impact most nontarget wildlife because of the location of the treatments in the nursery setting and because in Florida, where most citrus nurseries are located, the State will require as of January 1, 2008, all citrus nursery stock and other hosts of CG to be propagated inside of insect-proof enclosures. The enclosures will exclude nontarget wildlife. In addition, the effects of chemical treatments to the quality of the air, soil and water will be of no consequence and be of limited time duration.

The use of methyl bromide in the treatment of curry leaf is not toxic to humans or wildlife and will not persist in soil and water. Methyl bromide is a substance classified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under the Clean Air Act, as an ozone-depleting chemical; however, the use of methyl bromide for the movement of curry leaf is expected to be very small and well below any levels that could contribute measurably to ozone depletion.

The potential for affecting threatened and endangered species exists only at the site where the chemical treatments will occur, namely in the nurseries. Therefore, APHIS intends to evaluate each nursery that may apply pesticides for ACP control under this Federal order to determine its potential for impacting endangered and threatened species and critical habitat. APHIS will consult with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service to insure that proper measures are taken to protect endangered and threatened species.

Due to the nature of the proposed actions described herein, we anticipate no disproportionate adverse effects to minorities, low-income populations, or children in accordance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations," and Executive Order 13045, "Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks."

Since CG is a highly injurious citrus disease, and ACP is harmful both as the insect vector of the disease and as a citrus pest, in its own right, APHIS has determined that it is necessary to immediately address both the disease and the associated insect pest. This will be accomplished by the restriction of hosts of CG from areas where the disease is present, and the regulation and treatment of plants that are hosts of the psyllid from those areas where the insect is present and may be spread through the movement of infested nursery stock. APHIS will expand the CG regulatory program in Florida immediately and is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact for the EA before the comment period on the EA concludes. Nevertheless, all comments received on the EA will be evaluated and responded to after the comment period has ended.

The purpose of preparing an EA is for an agency to determine whether a significant environmental impact is likely to occur as a result of the proposed action. An environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared if implementation of the proposed action may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. I have determined that there would be no significant impact to the human environment from the implementation of the new Federal

order and, therefore, no EIS needs to be prepared. APHIS' finding of no significant impact from the Federal order is based up on the expected limited environmental consequences, as analyzed in the EA.

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Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

11/1/2007.
Date