

**Finding of No Significant Impact
Citrus Greening Control Program in Florida Nurseries
Environmental Assessment
January 2006**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), has prepared a final environmental assessment (EA) for a proposed program to quarantine, survey, detect, and apply pesticide treatments for the control of Citrus Greening Disease (CGD) and its vectors in Florida nurseries. The proposed program is needed to control one of the most serious bacterial diseases affecting citrus found in the world. The final 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
Pest Detection and Management Programs
4700 River Road, Unit 137
Riverdale, MD 20737

Both the September 2005 EA and the January 2006 final EA were prepared to comply with the procedural requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA implementing regulations, and USDA's and APHIS' NEPA implementing procedures.

Summary of the Environmental Assessment

The final EA analyzed the two appropriate alternatives for the proposed local control program: a no action alternative and the proposed local control action (the preferred alternative) which consists of a program designed to quarantine, detect, survey, and apply pesticide treatments for the control of citrus psyllids found in Florida commercial and ornamental nurseries. Each alternative was determined to have potential environmental consequences.

Opportunity for Public Involvement

The Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA implementing regulations require that environmental documents be made available to the persons and agencies that may be interested or affected. The September 2005 EA prepared for this proposed control program was made available to the public for comment on September 30, 2005, as announced in local newspapers in Dade and Broward Counties, Florida. The agency accepted comments on the September 2005 EA for 30 days, ending October 28, 2005, but then extended the public comment period until November 10, 2005. No comments were received on the EA.

Finding

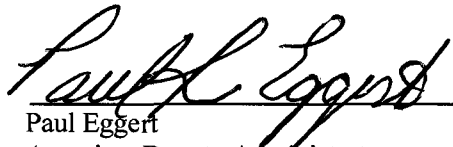
Based on the information presented both in the September 2005 EA and in the January 2006 final EA, as well as the biological assessment also prepared in reference to the proposed control program, I have selected the preferred alternative because it will be able to effectively address the serious plant disease risk caused by citrus greening and it has the feasibility to implement an integrated management operational program that will deliver the capability to meet the pest risk reduction objectives and to provide the lower overall risk to human health and the natural environment.

APHIS considered the potential environmental consequences of each alternative. Based on analysis of the potential environmental impacts resulting from the preferred alternative, the proposed local control program, APHIS has determined that there would be no significant impact on the quality of the human

environment from the implementation of the proposed action (preferred alternative), which is a designed program to locally control citrus psyllids in commercial nurseries through quarantine, detection, and chemical treatments. The applicable nurseries will only use Environmental Protection Agency- approved pesticide label applications for the control of citrus psyllids. In accordance with the pesticide applications being limited to nursery sites and following the label safety requirements and precautions, any environmental impacts to the human environment from exposure to the chemical pesticides being applied at the commercial nurseries are expected to be minimal.

APHIS' finding of no significant impact for this proposed action was furthermore based upon the application of standard operating procedures for the pesticide applications and their expected environmental effects, as analyzed and evaluated within the EA. APHIS will continue to confer, where appropriate, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that this program will have no adverse effects on endangered and threatened species.

In addition, I find that the environmental process undertaken for this program is entirely consistent with the principles of environmental justice, as expressed in Executive Order 12898 and 13045, and that implementation of the local control measures in commercial nurseries will not result in disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on any minority populations, children, and low-income populations. Accordingly, I have determined that this finding of no significant impact is the appropriate environmental decision to make in reference to the proposed control action. Lastly, because the analyses and evaluations in the final EA have determined that there should not be any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed program, I further find that an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared and that the proposed program may proceed.



Paul Eggert
Associate Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
United States Department of Agriculture

1 - 20 - 2006
Date