



News Release - NR07-09 - May 2, 2007

USDA PLACES QUARANTINE ON HAWAII PLANT EXPORTS

HONOLULU — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today placed a quarantine order restricting exports of a wide range of plant materials from Hawaii to the U.S. Mainland. The order was issued due to the recent detection of the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM), *Epiphyas postvittana*, in several counties in California.

The quarantine order requires nearly all plant material to be inspected visually and certified as free of LBAM prior to shipping by state or federal agricultural inspectors. This includes nursery stock, cut flowers, flower lei, fruits, vegetables, greenery, greenwaste and hay.

“We are notifying local nurseries about the quarantine order and the increased inspection requirements,” said Sandra Lee Kunimoto, Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. “We are also trying to coordinate with the local USDA inspection offices on how the quarantine order will be enforced.”

LBAM is native to Australia and is also found in New Zealand, Tanzania, Ireland and the UK. It is a major pest of apples, pears, grapes, cherries, citrus and stone fruits (peaches, plums, nectarines, and apricots). It was first detected in Hawaii more than a century ago, in 1896, but has not been a significant pest in Hawaii. In fact, LBAM may actually be considered a biocontrol agent for serious invasive weeds, such as gorse and blackberry in Hawaii.

LBAM has not been a significant pest in Hawaii; however, due to today’s action by USDA, HDOA will be conducting surveys to provide LBAM population density data to USDA. If the surveys show the moth is not present in Hawaii’s main agricultural areas, it will make it easier to certify LBAM-free areas and decrease the impact on growers in Hawaii.

Link to USDA news release: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/content/2007/05/lbam.shtml>