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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emerald Ash Borer Found in Licking County *Ohio Agriculture Department Expands Quarantine*

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Sept. 12, 2008) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) today expanded the state’s Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) quarantine area to include Licking County. The state’s quarantine, which is designed to slow the spread of the ash tree-killing insect, prohibits the movement of ash trees, parts of an ash tree, and all hardwood firewood from infested areas.

ODA officials discovered EAB on a commercial property in Monroe Township on Caswell Road south of State Route 37, and not far from the Johnstown city limits. The EAB specimen was collected from a purple-trapping device placed by ODA as part of its efforts to detect the insect in non-quarantined Ohio counties. Purple traps were placed on or near ash trees in over 150 locations throughout Licking County. More than 6,000 traps were placed in the southeast and far northeastern areas of the state. To date, this is Licking County’s first known EAB infestation.

It is illegal to take ash trees, parts of ash trees, and all hardwood firewood from any quarantined county into a non-quarantined county without a compliance agreement from ODA. Firewood dealers, businesses or woodlot owners interested in marketing and transporting ash trees or firewood from quarantined areas can do so only with a department-approved compliance agreement. These agreements stipulate handling practices that mitigate the spread of EAB. Violators of this quarantine may face fines up to \$4,000. It is also illegal to take these items from the state of Ohio, per federal quarantine.

Since EAB was first discovered in Ohio in 2003, the department has placed 43 counties under quarantine: Allen, Auglaize, Butler, Champaign, Crawford, Cuyahoga, Darke, Delaware, Defiance, Erie, Fairfield, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Licking, Logan, Lorain, Lucas, Mahoning, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Miami, Montgomery, Ottawa, Paulding, Portage, Preble, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Van Wert, Warren, Wayne, Williams, Wood and Wyandot counties. This quarantine has been established to stop the movement of firewood and ash logs, which are the largest contributors to the spread of EAB. For the latest quarantine map, go to the following Web site: www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/plnt-eab-maps.stm.

Ash trees infested with EAB typically die within five years. The pest belongs to a group of metallic wood-boring beetles. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

For information on the Emerald Ash Borer, compliance agreements, firewood restrictions, purple traps, and quarantine updates, call 1-888-OHIO-EAB.

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