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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gypsy Moth Aerial Treatments Planned for Southeastern Ohio

Areas include Hocking, Jackson and Ross Counties

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (April 21, 2008) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture will begin aerial treatments designed to slow the spread of the gypsy moth in Hocking, Jackson and Ross counties. Treatment blocks include:

- **Hocking County** - Total treatment of 50 acres in the Hocking State Forest.
- **Jackson County** - Total treatment of 112 acres in Jackson.
- **Ross County** - Total treatment of 103 acres in western Chillicothe.

The process will involve the use of a low flying aircraft just above the tree tops and will occur sometime during the end of April or the first two weeks of May, coinciding with the insect's first and second instar caterpillar stages. Treatments are most likely to occur during the early morning hours when weather conditions are ideal. High humidity, low temperature, and low wind are necessary conditions for successful application.

In Hocking County, the department will use one treatment of Dimilin, a chemical insecticide that works by preventing the formation of chitin in the outer skin of gypsy moth larvae. In Ross County, the department will use one treatment of BTK, a microbial compound that occurs naturally in numerous species of agricultural and forest insects and is a soil component worldwide. In Jackson County, the department will use two treatments of NPV, a naturally occurring infectious microorganism that control specifically gypsy moth. The two treatments will be applied five to seven days apart. Dimilin, BTK, and NPV are not toxic to humans, pets, birds or fish.

Pre-recorded daily updates on planned treatment blocks will be available to citizens by calling (614) 387-0907 or (800) 282-1955 ext. 37, after 5 p.m. Maps of application areas can be viewed at www.ohioagriculture.gov by clicking on "gypsy moth updates."

The gypsy moth is a non-native, invasive species that has been advancing into Ohio from Pennsylvania and Michigan over the last several years. In its caterpillar stage, it feeds on the leaves of more than 300 different trees and shrubs and is especially fond of oak. A healthy tree can usually withstand only two years of defoliation before it is permanently damaged or dies. To date, 49 of Ohio's 88 counties have established gypsy moth populations.

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The department operates three programs aimed at managing the gypsy moth in Ohio:

- “Suppression” program in counties where the pest is established,
- “Slow-the-Spread” program in counties within the transition zone, and
- “Eradication” program in isolated populations outside the transition zone.

The Suppression program is a voluntary program in which the landowner must request treatment. The focus of the Slow-the-Spread program is to detect and control isolated populations which helps slow the gypsy moths’ natural movement. The Eradication program is designed to eliminate isolated populations that arise ahead of the transition zone, usually caused by human movement.

Blocks across Ohio to be chemically treated this year include: 321 acres in Butler County; 121 acres in Cuyahoga County; 61 acres in Defiance County; 118 acres in Delaware County; 47 acres in Erie County; 106 acres in Franklin County; 246 acres in Hamilton County; 50 acres in Hocking County; 112 acres in Jackson County; 109 acres in Lorain County; 43 acres in Lucas County; 10 acres in Marion County; 103 acres in Ross County; 26 acres in Stark County; 64 acres in Wayne County; and 46 acres in Wood County.

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Note: For more information about gypsy moth, or to view treatment block maps, please visit www.ohioagriculture.gov and click on “gypsy moth updates.”