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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gypsy Moth Aerial Treatment Planned for Hamilton County

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (May 7, 2008) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture rescheduled an aerial treatment designed to eradicate the gypsy moth in Hamilton County last weekend in order to avoid interfering with Cincinnati’s Flying Pig Marathon. Weather permitting, the treatment will now occur on May 10 or May 11, most likely during the early morning hours when conditions are ideal. The timing of the treatment coincides with the insect’s first and second instar caterpillar stages.

The process will involve the use of a low flying aircraft just above the tree tops. High humidity, low temperature, and low wind are necessary conditions for successful application. The department will use Dimilin, a chemical insecticide that works by preventing the formation of chitin in the outer skin of gypsy moth larvae. This chemical is 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.

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.

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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.”