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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Agriculture Director Signs Emergency Order Restricting Movement of Disease-Susceptible Fish

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (May 3, 2007) – Ohio Agriculture Director Robert J. Boggs has issued a proclamation, prohibiting the intrastate transportation, sale or distribution of 36 live fish species susceptible to Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) out of the affected region in northern Ohio.

“Aquaculture is a thriving business in Ohio, and this specific proclamation will address the problem directly, by containing movement where it is necessary and allowing the rest of the state to carry on its day-to-day operations,” Boggs said. “We will continue to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to work on the issue of interstate restrictions.”

Testing to date performed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture’s Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory has revealed that VHS is not present in the lower three-fourths of the state. The department will continue to test and monitor for the disease.

VHS is a dangerously contagious or infectious animal disease which must be reported under state law. VHS was introduced into the wild fish population by an invasive species. It is not harmful to humans.

Ohio’s ban prohibits intrastate distribution of VHS-susceptible live fish or eggs, excluding channel catfish, out of the area in Ohio north of U.S. Highway 6 from the Indiana border to the intersection of U.S. Highway 6 and Interstate 90 near Fremont, continuing on I-90 to the Pennsylvania border. This also includes the Sandusky River south of U.S. Highway 6 to the Ballville Dam.

VHS-susceptible fish include: Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*), black crappie (*Pomoxis nigromaculatus*), bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), bluntnose minnow (*Pimephales notatus*), brown bullhead (*Ictalurus nebulosus*), brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), burbot (*Lota lota*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*), emerald shiner (*Notropis atherinoides*), freshwater drum (*Aplodinotus grunniens*), gizzard shad (*Dorosoma cepedianum*), grayling (*Thymallus thymallus*), haddock (*Gadus aeglefinus*), herring (*Clupea* spp), Japanese flounder (*Paralichthys olivaceus*), largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*), Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*), pike (*Esox lucius*), pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*), pumpkinseed (*Lepomis gibbosus*), rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), redhorse sucker (*Moxostoma* spp), rock bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*), rockling (*Onos mustelus*), round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus dolomieu*), sprat (*Sprattus* spp), turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*), walleye (*Sander vitreus*), white bass (*Morone chrysops*), white perch (*Morone Americana*), whitefish (*Coregonus* spp), and yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*).

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The prohibition, effective today for a period of one year, does not apply to live fish or eggs removed directly from production facilities that have tested negative for VHS. It also excludes live fish or eggs that are being transported for use by research scientists in closed research facilities with diagnostic laboratories.

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Note: Proclamation and map of the state quarantined area are available at www.ohioagriculture.gov.