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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gypsy Moth Open Houses Offered in Northwest Ohio

Ohio Department of Agriculture Experts to Discuss Aerial Treatments Planned for Spring

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Jan. 26, 2009) – Areas across Ohio are slated to receive gypsy moth aerial treatments by the Ohio Department of Agriculture in early spring to slow the spread of the destructive insect. Department staff members will host several open houses that will offer attendees the opportunity to speak directly with those who work with the program as well as learn about the pest and view maps of treatment areas.

Citizens can visit www.agri.ohio.gov to view a map of the treatment areas. Those with questions who live near a treatment area in the Northwest Ohio region will have the opportunity to talk with experts at the following open houses:

Putnam County Open House – Wednesday, Feb. 4, 6 – 8 p.m., Fire State #100, 850 N. Agner St., Ottawa, Ohio

Lucas County Open House – Tuesday, Feb. 10, 6 - 8 p.m., Springfield Township Building, 7617 Angola Rd., Holland, Ohio

Lucas County Open House – Wednesday, Feb. 11, 6 – 8 p.m., Nederhouser Community Hall, Olander Park, 6930 Sylvania Ave., Sylvania, Ohio

In Ohio, 49 counties are currently under gypsy moth quarantine regulations. Gypsy moths are invasive insects that attack trees and shrubs by defoliation. In its caterpillar stage, the moth feeds on the leaves of 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 combat this problem, the department uses different types of treatment strategies to slow the spread of gypsy moth in Ohio. Officials have three programs aimed to manage the pest, including:

- The “Suppression” program, which occurs in counties where the pest is already established but landowners voluntarily request treatment to help suppress populations.
- The “Slow-the-Spread” program, which occurs in counties in front of the larger, advancing gypsy moth population. In these counties, officials work to detect and control isolated populations in an effort to slow the overall advancing gypsy moth infestation.

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- The “Eradication” program, which occurs in areas not infested where an isolated population occurs because citizens have carried the pest to the area through infested firewood or outdoor equipment. Officials work through aggressive eradication efforts to eliminate gypsy moth from these areas.

Treatments used for gypsy moth control include:

- Foray (Btk), a microbial compound naturally found in some agricultural and forest insects
- Mating Disruption Flakes, flakes that disrupt the male moth’s ability to locate females for mating
- Dimilin, an insecticide that attacks gypsy moth larvae
- Gypchek, a bio-insecticide specifically used for control of gypsy moth

The department uses different types of treatments, depending on the location and extent of infestation. All treatments require an aerial application. Chemical treatments will take place in early to mid-May, and mating disruption treatments will begin in mid-June. The treatments are not toxic to humans, pets, birds, or fish.

Citizens who cannot attend the open houses and would like more information can contact the Plant Pest Control Section at 614-728-6400. Those who would like to provide official comment about the proposed treatment blocks should send correspondence to the department by March 15. Letters can be sent via e-mail to gypsymoth@agri.ohio.gov or by hard copy to the attention of the Gypsy Moth Program, Ohio Department of Agriculture, 8995 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068.

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Note to Editor: *These gypsy moth open houses are part of 14 open houses scheduled throughout Ohio. For a complete list, call or visit www.agri.ohio.gov.*

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