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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ohio Agriculture Director Celebrates Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week with Delaware Middle School Students

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (May 19, 2009) – Ohio Department of Agriculture Director Robert Boggs today honored John C. Dempsey Middle School science students for their ongoing Emerald Ash Borer research as part of Emerald Ash Borer Week in Ohio, May 17-23.

Advanced science teacher Deborah Bogard, in partnership with the US Forest Service, brought the innovative, hands-on Emerald Ash Borer research program to the classroom in the fall of 2006 after the pest was detected in a woodlot adjacent to the school. Each year, students study the progression and affects of the beetle and have even recently made significant findings that may help slow its movement.

“Through hands-on research, the students have identified native parasitoids being examined by the Smithsonian and researchers in Michigan that could potentially be a key component in slowing the harmful beetle,” said Boggs. “During Emerald Ash Borer Week in Ohio, I am proud to recognize the work of the students in cooperation with the US Forest Service as an integral part of our fight against this pest in Ohio.”

Emerald Ash Borer poses a threat to the state’s 5 billion ash trees and has been identified in 39 of the state’s 88 counties. To slow the spread of the devastating insect, a state quarantine makes it illegal to move hardwood firewood and ash tree materials, which could harbor the pest, from 44 quarantined counties. Violators could face fines up to \$4,000. A federal quarantine in place also makes it illegal to take hardwood firewood out of the state of Ohio without federal certification.

Ash trees infested with the beetle typically die within five years. This invasive pest belongs to a group of metallic-colored, wood-boring beetles. Adults are dark metallic green, one-half inch long, one-eighth inch wide, and fly from May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, damaging the trees’ water and nutrient-transporting tissues. When the larvae emerge as adults, they leave behind one-eighth inch D-shaped exit holes in the bark.

Emerald Ash Borer Week, designated each May, is part of a regional effort to raise awareness of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of this pest.

For more information, call 1-888-OHIO-EAB or go to www.agri.ohio.gov/eab.

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