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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Agriculture Officials to Survey Southwest Ohio for Asian Longhorned Beetle

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Sept. 30, 2009) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture, along with its partners from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Ohio State University, is set to begin a sight-survey during the winter months in southwest Ohio in an effort to detect the Asian Longhorned Beetle.

Inspectors will examine trees from December through February in northern Hamilton, southeastern Butler, and southwestern Warren counties. The survey will cover a 16-mile radius near Mason, Ohio, where an Asian Longhorned Beetle was found in the DOWNLITE warehouse in June. The USDA confirmed the finding.

First discovered in the U.S. in 1996, Asian Longhorned Beetles attack several species of trees including maple, willow, horsechestnut, buckeye, and American elm. While in its larvae stage, the Asian Longhorned Beetle affects trees by tunneling into large branches and the trunk, which can kill a tree within two to three years of infestation. The beetles emerge to mate between June and October.

Adult beetles are between three-fourths and 1 1/4 inch in length and have a shiny, black body covered with white spots. Antennae are black with white bands and can be up to 2 1/2 times longer than the body of the beetle. Affected trees will show three-eighths inch holes in the bark, which are created during the beetles' emergence. In addition, coarse sawdust may be visible at the tree base or where two branches meet, and the crown of the tree may appear thin or dying.

If a suspected specimen is found, citizens should contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture Plant Pest Division at 614-728-6400, or notify the local Ohio State Extension office.

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