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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ENCOURAGES OHIO CITIZENS TO CHECK THEIR TREES FOR SIGNS OF INVASIVE PESTS

State Taking Measures Against Walnut Twig Beetle and Asian Longhorned Beetle; Officials Confirm Thousand Cankers Disease for First Time in Ohio

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (August 12, 2013) - In an effort to protect the trees of Ohio, the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) is encouraging Ohio citizens to check their trees for signs of the Walnut Twig Beetle and Asian Longhorned Beetle. Both of these tree pests have been detected in southwest Ohio and threaten the health and viability of the state's hardwood forests, as well as some of the state's leading industries. Signs and symptoms of both the Walnut Twig Beetle and Asian Longhorned Beetle are visible in August.

The Walnut Twig Beetle is a small beetle known to carry a fungus that causes Thousand Cankers Disease (TCD), which can kill walnut trees. TCD is caused when the Walnut Twig Beetles bore into the branches and trunk tissue of walnut trees, thereby introducing the fungus. Repeated attacks by the insect lead to multiple individual infections by the fungus and the tree eventually dies. There is no known treatment for TCD. The disease was first found in Colorado in 2003 and has since been detected in 13 other states.

Walnut Twig Beetle was first confirmed in Ohio in late 2012 in traps set by Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry officials in Butler County. Additionally, scientists from the Ohio Plant Diagnostic Network, a cooperative partnership between ODA and The Ohio State University, recently isolated the TCD fungus from walnut branch samples from the Butler County area, marking the first time TCD has been confirmed in Ohio.

ODA is in the process of expanding its TCD quarantine to include Butler County. ODA officials have also been working to set Walnut Twig Beetle traps in portions of Butler, Hamilton and Warren counties to monitor for any additional infestations of the beetle.

Landowners and homeowners are strongly encouraged to watch for signs of TCD on their walnut trees. Symptoms of TCD vary, but commonly include thinning crowns, yellowing or wilted leaves in the crown and limbs that died recently.

Asian Longhorned Beetles are large, shiny black insects measuring 1 to 1 ½ inches long, not including antennae, with random white spots. Their white-banded antennae can be as long as the body itself on females and almost twice the body length on males. The invasive Asian Longhorned Beetle grows, reproduces in and kills up to 13 genera of trees such as maple, birch, horse chestnut, poplar, willow, elm, ash and buckeye.



Asian Longhorned Beetle was first confirmed in Ohio in 2011. The beetles were found to be infesting trees in Tate Township in Clermont County. In addition to the Ohio infestation, the beetle is currently found in parts of Massachusetts and New York, with eradication efforts succeeding in Illinois and New Jersey. ODA continues to work with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) and other partners to eradicate the Asian Longhorned Beetle from Ohio. In an effort to detect and prevent future infestations of Asian Longhorned Beetle USDA APHIS has declared the month of August as Tree Check Month, encouraging citizens to get out and check their trees for signs of the beetle.

Signs of Asian Longhorned Beetle infestation include perfectly round exit holes (about 3/8 to 1/2 inch in diameter) made by adult beetles when they emerge from trees; the pockmarks on tree trunks and branches where female beetles deposit eggs; frass (wood shavings and saw dust) produced by larval feeding and tunneling; early fall coloration of leaves or dead branches; and running sap produced by the tree at the egg laying sites, or in response to larval tunneling. Infested trees may also snap or break during high winds due to the wood being weakened by tunneling.

ODA encourages citizens to check their trees and be on the lookout for signs of these pests. To report signs and symptoms on your trees, please contact ODA at 855-252-6450 or by email at plantpest@agri.ohio.gov . For more information go to www.agri.ohio.gov.

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