Ohio | Department of Agriculture

John R. Kasich I **Governor** David T. Daniels I **Director**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State Offers Gypsy Moth Open Houses in Northwestern Ohio

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

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (Jan. 27, 2014) – 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 in treatment areas that will offer attendees the opportunity to speak directly with those who work with the program, learn about the pest, and view maps of treatment areas.

Citizens can also visit www.agri.ohio.gov/gypsymoth to learn more about this pest and to view maps 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:

Van Wert County (CANCELLED) – Feb. 3, 6 – 8 p.m., Van Wert Municipal Building, 515 East Main Street, Van Wert, Ohio

Lucas County – Feb. 4, 6 – 8 p.m, Oak Openings Metro Lodge, 5240 Wilkins Road, Whitehouse, Ohio

Hancock County (RESCHEDULED) – Feb. 13, 6 – 8 p.m., Delaware Twp. Hall, 601 South Main Street, Mt. Blanchard, Ohio

Wyandot County – Feb. 6, 6 – 8 p.m., Upper Sandusky City Hall, 119 North 7th Street, Upper Sandusky, Ohio

Gypsy moths are invasive insects that attack more than 300 different types of trees and shrubs, with oak being the preferred species. In its caterpillar stage, the moth feeds heavily on the leaves of trees and shrubs limiting their ability to photosynthesize. A healthy tree can usually withstand only two years of defoliation before it is permanently damaged or dies.

Currently in Ohio there are 51 counties under gypsy moth quarantine, limiting the movement of regulated articles out of those counties.

-more-

To address 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. Landowner(s) must 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.
- The "Eradication" program, which occurs in non-infested areas where an isolated population occurs, often due to the movement of infested firewood or outdoor equipment. Department officials use control treatments aimed at eradication of gypsy moth from these areas.

Treatments used for gypsy moth control include:

- Foray (Btk), a compound derived from a naturally occurring bacteria found in the soil that is effective in gypsy larvae control
- Mating disruption product, flakes or liquid that disrupt the male moth's ability to locate females during mating season
- 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. Foray and Gypchek 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 to provide official comment about the proposed treatment blocks should send correspondence to the department by March 1. Letters can be sent by e-mail to plantpest@agri.ohio.gov or by hard copy to the attention of the Gypsy Moth Program, Plant Health Division – Building 23, Ohio Department of Agriculture, 8995 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

-30-

Note to Editor: *These gypsy moth open houses are part of 21 open houses scheduled throughout Ohio. For a complete list, call or visit www.agri.ohio.gov.*

Media Contact: Brett Gates, Public Information Officer, 614-752-9817