



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
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USDA Treats Trees in Suffolk County, Mass., Against Asian Longhorned Beetle

WASHINGTON, April 25, 2011--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will treat 3,200 trees susceptible to the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) with injections of the insecticide imidacloprid in Suffolk County, Mass.

ALB treatments will start June 1, weather permitting, within the Jamaica Plain area of the city of Boston. The treatment area represents a 1/4-mile radius around the known infested trees previously detected and removed in July 2010.

Prior to the start of control treatments, state and federal experts from the Massachusetts ALB cooperative eradication program will host two public meetings to present current plans for implementing control treatments and answer questions. The meetings will be held on the following dates and times:

- Thursday, April 28, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., Faulkner Hospital Auditorium, 1153 Centre Street, Boston, Mass.;
- Saturday, April 30, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Franklin Park Clubhouse, 1 Circuit Drive, Boston, Mass.

Program officials will contact property owners within the designated treatment area to obtain a signed treatment release prior to the use of control treatments. Control treatments are a vital component of the area-wide eradication strategy. APHIS encourages all property owners within the treatment area to support the treatment of host trees.

The public can assist the eradication effort by allowing program officials access to their property to evaluate susceptible trees for any signs of ALB infestation and/or to treat trees that are susceptible to ALB infestation. Chemical treatments will only be applied to noninfested ALB host trees.

Control treatment applications are conducted by contracted Massachusetts licensed pesticide applicators. The licensed applicators will treat the ALB host trees using hand-held application devices, where the pesticide is injected directly into the trunk or soil at the base of the tree, allowing the imidacloprid to be dispersed through the tree's vascular system. The insecticide reaches adult ALB feeding on small twigs and leaves, and larvae feeding just beneath the bark of treated host trees.

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Imidacloprid is a registered pesticide under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. It is used in agriculture, the lawn care industry to kill lawn grubs, and in some pet treatments to kill fleas. Approved for ALB program use, the insecticide has proven to reduce beetle populations in research completed in the United States and China. It is currently used in the New York eradication program and has been used as part of ALB eradication activities in New Jersey and Illinois. APHIS oversees treatment applications and conducts environmental monitoring as part of the ALB eradication program.

ALB threatens urban and suburban trees, as well as valued forest resources, and threatens such industries as maple syrup production, hardwood lumber processing, nurseries and tourism. Control treatments are part of the ALB cooperative eradication program's effort to prevent further infestation of this invasive insect and reduce populations.

APHIS and its cooperators undertake eradication by imposing quarantines, conducting visual inspections, removing infested trees and chemically treating noninfested host trees as part of an integrated eradication strategy. The goal is to eliminate ALB before it can establish itself elsewhere.

For treatment maps, review the ALB website at www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/asian_lhb/ and select "ALB Program Maps." For more information about program activities in Massachusetts, please call 1-866-702-9938. Log on to www.aphis.usda.gov or massnrc.org/pests/alb, or visit www.BeetleBusters.info for more information about ALB, including pictures and where to report a suspected beetle.

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