

From: Phytodoer@aol.com  
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Subject: if you buy plants imported from abroad, you are part of the problem ...  
To: <snip>

Subj: Asian longhorned beetles break quarantine  
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From: mbuccowich@fs.fed.us (Mark Buccowich/NE/USDAFS)

Bad news on the Forest Health front.....

Asian longhorned beetles break quarantine

Thursday, November 15, 2001

By Environmental News Network: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is widening quarantine boundaries "on an emergency basis" in an effort to contain the Asian longhorn beetle in New York and Illinois to limit its spread.

The beetle invader bores into the heartwood of a host tree, eventually killing the tree. Infestations are responsible for the destruction of a combined 7,900 trees in the New York and Illinois quarantined areas in the past four years.

The new boundaries are necessary because recent surveys found infestations of Asian longhorned beetles that have occurred outside of the quarantined areas.

The beetles were first found at Amityville, N.Y., in 1996. Now they have taken over portions of New York City in three boroughs - Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens - as well as Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island.

They are now also found in Illinois in DuPage County and in Cook County, which includes the city of Chicago. There the beetles have moved into the Ravenswood area. The first find of Asian longhorned beetles in Chicago was reported to the federal government's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) by a local truck driver who had delivered a load of beetle-infested wood. He identified the bug himself by visiting the APHIS Web site.

Recent surveys conducted by inspectors of state, county, and city agencies and by inspectors of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) documented the beetles' spread.

The interstate movement of regulated articles from all quarantined areas is restricted. Articles regulated under the quarantine include all hardwoods, green lumber, and other wood materials living, dead, cut, or fallen. The latter include nursery stock, logs, stumps, roots, branches, and debris of a half-inch or more in diameter of maple, horse chestnut, birch, poplar, willow, and elm.

"Extreme caution should be taken to assure unintentional transport of the beetle does not occur," APHIS warned.

The federal rule requires that regulated articles moved outside the quarantine area meet certain conditions and be accompanied by a certificate or a limited permit issued by USDA.

The Asian longhorn beetle, native to China, bores into healthy hardwood trees and feeds on living tree tissue during the larval stage. Immature beetles bore into tree trunks and branches, causing heavy sap flow from wounds and sawdust accumulation at tree bases. They feed on - and spend the winter in - the interiors of trees, APHIS researchers said.

Adult beetles emerge in the spring and summer months from round holes about the size of a dime that they bore through branches and trunks of trees. Later, throughout the summer, adult beetles emerge from exit holes and feed on the small twigs of host trees.

The Asian longhorned beetle originally entered the United States in solid wood packing material from China and Hong Kong. \*\*\*\*Now officials from APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine section have determined that several species of longhorned beetles are hitchhiking to the United States in nursery stock of dwarfed plants - also called bonsai or penjing - shipped from China and other Asian countries.\*\*\*\*

Popularity of and demand for dwarfed plants is up in the United States, so shipments from abroad are increasing. [US imports of bonsai increased from fewer than 600 plants in 1993 to 54,749 plants in 1998, according to an APHIS notice in the Federal Register -- Faith T. Campbell addition] Many of these shipments consist of mature, apparently field-grown or wild-collected plants not subjected to the long-term meticulous care true bonsai plants receive. Longhorned beetles and other tree pests are more likely to infest field-collected plants than plants grown under supervised conditions in nurseries.

For the large trees that are infested with Asian longhorned beetles, destruction has been the only method of eradicating the insect. All infested trees are being removed, chipped, and burned to destroy every trace of the insects.

In conjunction with surveys and tree removal, APHIS officials are using the insecticide imidacloprid to decrease beetle populations and future tree loss. If a tree is found to be infested, it will be removed regardless of treatment, APHIS said.

The urgency to stop this pest is so great that APHIS Administrator Bobby Acord has determined that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are "contrary to the public interest" and that there is good cause for making this rule effective less than 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

Although the quarantined area is being widened without public comment, people can still let their views be known. APHIS will give consideration to comments postmarked on or before Jan. 8, 2002. Please send an original and three copies of your comments to:

Docket No. 01-092-1

Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD  
APHIS, Suite 3C03  
4700 River Road, Unit 118  
Riverdale, MD 20737- 1238.

The goal is to identify and eradicate this destructive insect from New York and Illinois before it can establish itself elsewhere in the country.

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