

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

[Docket No. 98-093-1]

Declaration of Emergency Because of the Mediterranean Fruit Fly and the Mexican Fruit Fly

Serious outbreaks of the Mediterranean fruit fly, *Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann), and the Mexican fruit fly, *Anastrepha ludens* (Loew), are occurring in California.

The Mediterranean fruit fly is one of the most destructive pests of over 200 species of fruits, nuts, and vegetables, especially citrus and stone fruits. The pest can develop rapidly and spread easily, causing severe damage to entire areas where citrus and other fruits and vegetables are grown.

The Mexican fruit fly is a destructive pest of citrus and many other types of fruits. The short life cycle of the Mexican fruit fly allows rapid development of serious outbreaks that can cause severe economic losses in commercial citrus-producing areas.

As of July 1999, there is an infestation of the Mediterranean fruit fly in portions of Orange and Riverside Counties, CA. Also, an infestation of the Mexican fruit fly has been found in a portion of San Diego County, CA. The presence of these fruit flies in the continental United States could severely disrupt the fruit and vegetable industry due to crop damages, additional pesticide use, and quarantine requirements. The permanent presence of these pests in California would result in yearly losses of over \$205 million. If allowed to spread throughout the United States, the estimated annual losses are over \$1.5 billion for the Mediterranean fruit fly alone.

In cooperation with the State of California, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has initiated a program to eradicate these fruit fly infestations in California. The State of

California is assisting APHIS in the funding of the program costs. However, APHIS resources are insufficient to meet the estimated \$8.7 million needed for the Federal share. In addition, some of these resources may be needed to fund other Mediterranean and Mexican fruit fly emergencies before the end of the year.

Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of the Act of September 25, 1981, 95 Stat. (7 U.S.C. 147b), I declare that there is an emergency which threatens the citrus and other fruit and vegetable-growing industries in this country and hereby authorize the transfer and use of such funds as may be necessary from appropriations or other funds available to the agencies or corporations of the United States Department of Agriculture for conducting a program to detect and identify Mediterranean fruit fly and Mexican fruit fly infested areas, to control and prevent the spread of the Mediterranean fruit fly and the Mexican fruit fly to noninfested areas in the United States, and to eradicate the Mediterranean fruit fly and the Mexican fruit fly wherever they may be found in the continental United States.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This declaration of emergency shall become effective July 9, 1999.

Dan Glickman,

Secretary of Agriculture.

[FR Doc. 99-18436 Filed 7-19-99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

[Docket No. 99-004-1]

Declaration of Emergency Because of the Mediterranean Fruit Fly in Mexico

A serious outbreak of the Mediterranean fruit fly, *Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann), is occurring in Chiapas, Campeche, and Tabasco, Mexico.

The Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) is one of the most destructive pests of over 200 species of fruits, nuts, and vegetables, especially citrus and stone fruits. Infestations can develop rapidly and spread easily, causing severe damage to entire citrus and other fruit and vegetable growing areas. At least 43

countries are known to regulate in some manner for the Medfly.

In cooperation with the governments of Mexico and Guatemala, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) conducts activities in Mexico and Guatemala to maintain a sterile Medfly barrier in western Guatemala to prevent the spread of Medfly through Mexico and into the United States. This program is called the Moscamed Program.

During the summer and fall of 1998, APHIS and cooperators in Mexico detected 253 infestations of Medfly in the States of Chiapas, Campeche, and Tabasco, Mexico. Over 160 infestations are currently active in the State of Chiapas. Mexico has initiated programs to eradicate the infestations, but does not have the resources to eradicate the Medfly and keep the Moscamed Program running without assistance from the United States.

The establishment of Medfly in the continental United States could severely disrupt the fruit and vegetable industry due to crop damage and loss of export markets. An economic assessment completed in 1993 estimates that if Medfly were established in the continental United States, losses attributed to the Medfly would cost \$1.5 billion annually. Keeping Mexico free of Medfly will greatly reduce the risk that this pest will be introduced into the United States. Fruit fly experts predict that if the pest is allowed to continue to spread in Mexico, the Medfly will reach the U.S. border by the year 2005.

Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of the Act of September 25, 1981, 95 Stat. 953 (7 U.S.C. 147b), I declare that there is an emergency that threatens the citrus and other fruit and vegetable industries of this country, and I authorize the transfer and use of such funds as may be necessary from appropriations or other funds available to the United States Department of Agriculture to conduct a program to detect, control, and prevent the spread of the Medfly in Mexico, in order to prevent its introduction into the United States.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This declaration of emergency shall become effective July 9, 1999.

Dan Glickman,

Secretary of Agriculture.

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