

SPOTTED LANTERNFLY SIGHTING CONFIRMED IN MERCER COUNTY



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2018

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Quarantine Put in Place for Three Counties

(TRENTON) – New Jersey Secretary of Agriculture Douglas H. Fisher today announced the New Jersey Department of Agriculture and United States Department of Agriculture personnel confirmed the sighting of the Spotted Lanternfly in northern Mercer County in New Jersey earlier this month. There were two confirmed sightings in southern Warren County earlier this summer. The specific areas where the Spotted Lanternfly has been identified have been treated.

The sightings have led the State Department of Agriculture to quarantine the two affected counties as well as Hunterdon County, which is between Warren and Mercer counties, to prevent the spread of the Spotted Lanternfly.

“The Spotted Lanternfly is an excellent hitchhiker, with the ability travel on all types of vehicles as well as various landscaping, wood-based materials and agricultural produce,” Fisher said. “It’s imperative that we stop the movement of this pest before it can make an impact on New Jersey.”

Businesses and the general public in the quarantine area are required to obtain and fill out a New Jersey residence checklist before moving any of the articles listed [here](#). The checklist also serves to inform the public about the Spotted Lanternfly including how to identify all life stages of the insect and minimize or eliminate its movement.

Business entities that routinely travel in and out of the quarantine area are required to take, and pass, training regarding the Spotted Lanternfly that is supplied for free by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at <http://bit.ly/2K92DdZ>. New Jersey will accept and recognize the Pennsylvania permit. Those businesses that interact exclusively in New Jersey’s quarantine zone must comply with the details outlined in the quarantine order. The quarantine also allows access to property for Department, USDA, or USDA contracted agents where the Spotted Lanternfly is suspected or confirmed to evaluate and treat the property if necessary.

The Spotted Lanternfly is currently in a later nymph stage and is likely to be red with white spots before becoming a full adult in mid-August. The Spotted Lanternfly, which is native to China, India, Vietnam and East Asia, was first located in Pennsylvania in 2014 and has spread to 13 counties there, which are also quarantined. The pest prefers Tree of Heaven as its host, but can feed on 70 other different plant species, including fruit trees, ornamental trees, woody trees, vegetables, and herbs and vines, including agricultural crops like grapes. The Lanternfly in its current stage is about a half-inch to three-quarter of an inch long.

Surveillance will continue in the immediate areas where the species has been found as well as along the Delaware River border in New Jersey. New Jersey Department of Agriculture field crews have been conducting surveys for this insect along the New Jersey-Pennsylvania border from Warren to Burlington Counties with no previous findings before this year.

The Department is asking for everyone’s help in identifying areas where low numbers of this insect may be. Residents can email pictures of suspect insects to SLF-plantindustry@ag.nj.gov or call the New Jersey Spotted Lanternfly Hotline at 1-833-223-2840 (BAD-BUG-0) and leave a message detailing your sighting and contact information. For more information about this insect go to <https://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/divisions/pi/prog/spottedlanternfly.html>