



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service



AG COMMISSIONER/SEALER NEWS

NOVEMBER 2013

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**Renewal season will
begin on Monday,
December 2, 2013.**

**Please call our office
at (707) 253-4357
to schedule an
appointment.**

Dave Whitmer Retiring After 33 Years of Service

Dave Whitmer will retire as the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner and Sealer of Weights and Measures on December 28, 2013, following 33 years of stellar service protecting and promoting Napa County and California agriculture.

Born and raised in Napa, Dave attended Napa Valley College before moving on to California State University, Chico, where he received his Bachelor's Degree in Biology in 1978. After a brief stint as a seasonal inspector at California Department of Food and Agriculture's Mt. Shasta inspection station, Dave began his career with the Napa County Agriculture Department in 1981 as an Agricultural Biologist. In the early years, Dave gained experience working in many of the department's programs including pest detection, pest management, plant quarantine and pesticide law enforcement.

In 1986, Dave was promoted to Deputy Agricultural Commissioner where he oversaw the pesticide regulatory program and all of its challenges. Dave was appointed by the Napa County Board of Supervisors to Agricultural Commissioner in 1994 and to Sealer of

Weights and Measures in 1995.

Some of the pest issues have brought about the biggest challenges in his career. "The hardest part of this job is to know when to 'ring the bell' to organize the industry and community over a significant issue," said Dave. A couple of times that Dave had to ring the bell was when he had to work cooperatively with industry, government and the community to develop the glassy-winged sharpshooter (GWSS) program in the late 1990s, and more recently to launch the eradication effort to rid Napa County and California of the European Grapevine Moth (EGVM).

In 2002, Dave was recognized by then-Senator Wes Chesboro and Assemblywoman Patricia Wiggins as a "peacemaker," involving the community in the development of the GWSS program. For his efforts in putting together the EGVM program, Dave was awarded the first-ever *Special Achievement – Manager Award* by the California Agricultural Commissioners and Sealers Association this past October. "This award is particularly gratifying to me



because it was presented to me by my peers. I must admit that while it is great to be personally recognized, much of my success can be attributed to a tremendous staff, great relationships and response from the local wine grape industry, state and federal agencies," Dave said.

Along with some of his fellow commissioners, Dave has helped to develop a lobbying presence in Washington, D.C. to advance the causes and needs of California agriculture and to secure much-needed funding for important pest exclusion programs. He helped write the pest prevention language in the 2008 Farm Bill which will likely be included in the bill when it is reauthorized in 2013 or 2014.

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Dave Whitmer Retiring After 33 Years of Service



Dave receives CACASA's first Special Achievement – Manager Award

“I’ve had a long and enjoyable career. The department is in good shape with staff in place to keep the programs moving forward.”

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“It’s been gratifying to know the state is better protected because of the relationships we’ve built in Washington, D.C.,” he said.

What Dave has enjoyed most about his career is feeling he made a difference and had a role in protecting Napa County agriculture. “The Napa Valley is a special place because of the diversity of soils, the amazing climate and the dedicated industry. I feel a great deal of satisfaction in having brought people together and to have had the opportunity to represent this wonderful place,” he said. Dave is also excited about the local food initiative and is eager to see the direction the Napa County Local Food Advisory Council will take in promoting local

food production and creating a more sustainable local food system.

After he hangs up his commissioner hat, Dave will work with a group in the community to bring the national anti-poverty initiative *Circles* to Napa County with the goal of empowering the poor. The program will connect the poor with existing private non-profit and governmental organizations so they can overcome the roadblocks to poverty and will provide mentors to support individuals in their progress to greater self-sufficiency.

Dave said, “I’ve had a long and enjoyable career. The department is in good shape with staff in place to keep the programs moving

forward. We have good relationships with industry and with our state and federal partners. It’s the right time for me to retire.”

Dave will celebrate his 35th wedding anniversary with his wife, Loie, in Kauai in March and plans to see more of the U.S. traveling with their fifth wheel. “I’ve flown over the country many times, but I’d like to see more of it from the ground.”

We wish Dave an enjoyable and fruitful time in his much-deserved retirement. A celebration of Dave’s career will be held at the Napa Valley Expo on January 11, 2014.

For ticket information, please go to the following link: <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/492545>

Continuing Education Classes

SPANISH-LANGUAGE CLASSES:

-- 9:00 to 11:00 AM --

Miércoles, Diciembre 11, 2013

- Malezas en el Condado de Napa
- Respiradores – Resumen rápido

Miércoles, Enero 15, 2014

- Programa de Comunicación de Peligro
- VMB – Información al día
- EGVM – Información al día

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CLASSES:

-- 1:00 to 3:00 PM --

Wednesday, December 11, 2013

- Managing Weeds in Napa County
- Respirator Overview

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

- Hazard Communication
- VMB Update
- EGVM Update

European Grapevine Moth Program Update

With the 2013 harvest behind us, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office would like to update you on this year's European Grapevine Moth (EGVM) program activities. The following report will provide you with information on 2013 trapping results, treatment focus, and the activities related to the enforcement of the EGVM quarantine requirements.

Detection Trapping and Treatment

In 2013, we implemented the Technical Working Group (TWG) recommendation of trapping at a higher density of 100 traps per square mile (compared to 25/square mile in 2012) in order to begin the quarantine deregulation process. Napa County deployed 11,561 EGVM detection traps in commercial vineyards and urban areas and caught a total of only 40 moths (36 in the first generation and four in the second). This number represents a major cumulative reduction from the 77 moths trapped in 2012, 111 in 2011, and over 100,000 in 2010. The majority of the finds were located in the Greenfield Road area, where we had also caught EGVM in 2012.

Growers made pesticide applications on approximately 9,000 acres in vineyards within 500 meters of 2012 and 2013 finds. Isomate mating disruption dispensers (MD) were placed on approximately 2,700 acres in 2013, in contrast to the placement of dispensers on 24,000 acres in 2012. MD was deployed around select 2012 finds in the Greenfield Road and Olive

Hill Lane areas and within 500 meters of new 2013 finds. Growers benefitted from free MD made possible by the Ag Commissioner's Office.

CDFA conducted either pesticide treatments or flower/fruit removal in grapevines in urban settings in 2011 and where 2012/2013 finds occurred. In addition, MD was deployed in residential settings associated with 2012 and 2013 finds.

We continue to gather information on abandoned properties as we discover them and try to work cooperatively with property owners. However, this year we had to go through the court system and obtain an order to remove a small vineyard in Yountville. The vines were removed in late August, and a lien was placed on the property to recover the cost of removal. We do not take this process lightly, but we were left with no option given the lack of cooperation from the property owner over a long period of time. We have placed a high priority on dealing with abandoned vineyards when they are found.

This is the third year in a row that we have experienced a significant decline in the number of EGVM trapped, and it demonstrates the great commitment that Napa County growers have made to eradicate EGVM, as well as the cooperation that exists between federal, state, and county agencies. Even though we still had EGVM detections this year, the

trapping of just 40 moths is particularly significant considering that the decrease of mating disruption deployment in 2013 enhanced the effectiveness of the traps. Additionally, the increased density of trapping from 25 to 100 traps per square mile greatly increased our ability to detect small moth populations.

Quarantine Compliance

Three meetings were held in February to inform growers of the EGVM program for the coming year. Targeted meetings were also held in August to review quarantine and sanitation requirements for the harvest season with growers whose vineyards were located within 500 meters of 2012 and 2013 EGVM finds. The importance of sanitation of all harvest equipment, including mechanical harvesters, was stressed, with the goal of mitigating the potential for the spread of EGVM life stages.

Shortly after the August meetings, CDFA and USDA granted a variance from compliance agreement requirements to exempt certain growers from tarping and slack-fill requirements. The exemption did not apply to growers within 500 meters of 2012 and 2013 finds or to growers transporting fruit out of Napa County. We conducted outreach concerning the exemption through direct e-mails to compliance agreement holders and through e-mails blasts by industry groups.

(Article continued on page 4)



European grapevine moth adult

In Napa County, 40 moths were trapped during the 2013 trapping season compared to 77 moths in 2012, 111 moths in 2011 and over 100,000 moths in 2010.

By following recommended treatments and the requirements outlined in the compliance agreements, we can meet the goal of eradication.



Inspecting EGVM Detection Trap

European Grapevine Moth Program Update

(Article continued from page 3)

Growers responded well by returning signed copies of the new hauler compliance agreement document that authorized the exemption.

Similar to last year, inspectors were sent out during harvest to verify that the requirements set forth in the EGVM compliance agreements were being met. Inspections were conducted randomly at vineyards and wineries, and in conjunction with the California Highway Patrol truck inspection unit. Two inspection stations on Silverado Trail and Highway 29 were set up on two different days. Over 100 inspections were conducted during harvest. While most growers inspected were exempt from tarping and slack-fill requirements, general cleanliness of trailers and empty bins was assessed.

We issued only one Violation Notice to a Sonoma-based

shipper who was not following compliance agreement requirements. The Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner's Office conducted inspections of winegrapes transported from Napa. Sonoma issued Violation Notices to four Napa County-based haulers for failure to tarp or slack-fill bins and to maintain equipment in sanitary conditions. Failure to properly manage loads and to maintain equipment sanitation can be counterproductive to eradication efforts and has the potential to spread the pest to new areas or to re-infest areas where the pest has been eradicated.

Growers pulling vineyards this fall and winter must remember that stakes and end posts (or other growing equipment) must be stored on the property no less than 60 feet away from any EGVM host material for a

minimum nine months before they can be removed, according to quarantine requirements. Growers can bring such equipment directly to an approved landfill facility located within the quarantine area. For growers that will not burn the removed vines on site, movement of the material must comply with green waste handling requirements and be taken to the landfill.

Great progress has been made in Napa County to eradicate EGVM, as illustrated by the low number of moth detections. In addition, there were no EGVM finds in 2013 in any county other than Napa. The Technical Working Group met at the end of September to recommend the continued course of action. We will keep the industry informed of the 2014 game plan as it is finalized. By following recommended treatments and the requirements outlined in the compliance agreements, we can eventually meet the goal of eradication.



European grapevine moth larva



EGVM hauler inspection station

The Need for Timely Pesticide Use Report Submissions

California's pesticide use reporting system is generally recognized as the largest and most complete pesticide database in the world. The system provides critical information for protecting human health and safety, environmental stewardship, and effective pest management. For example, European Grapevine Moth (EGVM) application information is of great importance for the Ag Commissioner's Office to assess the extent of industry participation. CDFA, USDA, and other stakeholders can use this data to help make critical decisions as we move forward in our efforts to eradicate this important pest.

To be effective, information must be accurate, complete, and collected in a timely manner. By law, pesticide use reports (PURs) are due in the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office by the tenth day of the month following the month in which the work was performed. Timely submission of this data allows Ag Commissioner staff to review the information near the time of application. If any application errors are identified, staff can communicate with growers and work with them to solve the problems.

Because of the need for timely information, the Ag Commissioner's Office scrutinizes growers' submissions of reports of all applications. Late submission of PURs can subject growers to compliance and enforcement actions, possibly resulting in monetary fines. Questions about pesticide use reporting requirements should be directed to the Ag Commissioner's Office at (707) 253-4357.

Update on Napa County Local Food Advisory Council Activities

For this year's Food Day observance in October, the Napa County Local Food Advisory Council (NCLFAC) sponsored public showings in American Canyon, Napa, and St. Helena of the film *A Place at the Table*. This film chronicles the story of hunger in America as told through the lives of three families living across our country, and how the issue can be resolved. Fifty million Americans, one in four children, do not know where their next meal is coming from. Though many might not recognize it, the issue of hunger is serious even here in Napa County. Informal and facilitated discussions were held before and after the screenings, bringing to light what actions citizens and non-profits can do to begin to solve this national and local issue.

In other NCLFAC business, on January 8, 2013, the Napa County Board of Supervisors passed a revised model beekeeping ordinance based on recommendations from the

Council's ad hoc subcommittee on Local Food Policy. The Board of Supervisors adopted by resolution the Best Management Practices (BMPs) developed by the Napa County Beekeeper Association that directs local beekeepers to operate in accordance with those practices. These BMPs encompass important factors like hive placement, flight screening, hive management and disease control. American Canyon revised its beekeeping ordinance to be in line with the Napa County ordinance, and the City of Napa is seeking final approval by the City Council to follow the same model.

Members of the council and its subcommittees continue to work on other issues, including the promotion of emerging farmers and school gardens, endeavoring to get more local produce into institutional food service like in local school lunches as well as greater development of community gardens in the city of Napa. For information on the NCLFAC, and to review agendas and minutes of recent meetings, visit the Council's website at: <http://www.countyofnapa.org/LFAC/>.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES: Retail Motor Fuel Meters

Local gas stations are among the most prominent locations where Weights and Measures work is noticed. Our department performs unannounced inspections annually at these businesses, and additional inspections are conducted if we receive a complaint or when a repair agency has performed work that affects dispenser accuracy.

The inspection of the measurement of fuel is performed with a special piece of equipment. We use a petroleum test truck that is shared under a joint powers agreement with Sonoma and Marin counties. This truck contains four mounted "provers" with holding tanks to collect the fuel after each test. Each prover is a five-gallon standard with cubic inch measurements. The tolerance on a five-gallon test draft is +6 and -6 cubic inches, a value fixing the limit of allowable error. This is not much of a tolerance as there are 231 cubic inches per gallon. Once the five gallons of fuel are dispensed into the prover and observed, the load is then poured into the holding tanks on the truck. If a meter is found to be within tolerance, a paper seal is applied to the face of the dispenser for that grade. If a meter is found to be against the customer and out of tolerance beyond the -6 cubic inches, it is "red-tagged" and cannot be used until repaired, which must be done within 30 days. If a meter is found to be in the customers favor and out of tolerance beyond the +6 cubic inches, it can continue to be used but must be repaired within 30 days. After all the meters have been tested, the truck is then moved to the storage tank area, and the dispensed fuel is returned to the appropriate storage tanks.



All signage and labeling has minimum and maximum size and visibility requirements that need to be verified. The price signs and pump dispensers must match grade, price, and brand. Any discount signage must meet requirements. Octane signage and the "gasoline" and "diesel" grades are inspected. The storage tanks are inspected for the required signage/labeling. This check is important to assure that the correct product is deposited into the correct storage tanks by the delivery drivers. California law requires the availability of free air and water if you purchase fuel, and specific signage must be posted. Disabled drivers signage is also required and verified. All petroleum products (motor oil, gear oil, engine coolant, transmission fluid, and brake fluid) sold at the business are inspected for required labeling. The storage tanks are inspected to check for the presence of water. If necessary, we will take a fuel sample and transport it to our state lab to test for contamination and/or to verify that the fuel meets state standards for quality.

If you have any questions regarding retail motor fuel meters, contact our office at (707) 944-8714.

Olive Fruit Fly Strikes Back!



Olive fruit fly adult

Well timed applications of insecticides and sanitation measures are critical to controlling olive fruit fly populations.

Olive growers in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties have sustained significant crop losses during the 2013 season due to olive fruit fly (OLFF). After experiencing a couple of years of relatively minor amounts of fruit damage, many growers have recently contacted our office to report infestation levels of 10-50%, producing unusable, rotten olives.

Olive growing experts have proposed a couple of possible reasons to explain the recent local OLFF population explosion and fruit damage. First, the Bay Area experienced a relatively mild winter this year, and the fly, which overwinters in the pupal stage (usually in the soil), may not have been affected as much in the absence of sustained periods of freezing temperatures. Second, growers may have become complacent in recent years due to low damage levels, and applications of *GF-120 Fruit Fly Bait*, historically the most popular pesticide registered for OLFF control, may not have been made early or often enough during the season – or not at all!

There are several other products labeled and registered for use on olives to control OLFF. *Surround* is a kaolin clay formulation that coats the fruit and makes it inhospitable for the fly to deposit its eggs inside; like *GF-120*, it is an organically certified product. *Danitol*, a federally restricted, pyrethroid-based spray for use only by certified applicators, is also available as an alternative pesticide. Its drawbacks include high toxicity to bees, other beneficial insects, and aquatic organisms; requirements to establish specific buffer zones in the vicinity of aquatic habitats; and strict limits on the amount of the product that can be applied each season due to the very real probability of OLFF developing resistance. *Pyganic*, another organically certified product, contains pyrethrins, biodegrades rapidly, and is potentially lethal to beneficial insects.

In the future, it is possible that other existing pesticides not currently labeled for use on olives may be granted “Special Local Need” registrations to combat OLFF if growers are overwhelmed by high infestation levels. *GF-120* once carried an SLN label for olives as it underwent the testing protocol eventually leading to its current status as a general use pesticide available to the public.

On a positive note, recent communications with representatives from other olive-producing counties throughout the State revealed that growers who have been applying *GF-120* on a *regular* schedule have had good control of OLFF.

Remember that sanitation also plays a major role in reducing population numbers: After harvest, remove any fruit hanging on the trees and falling on the ground in order to minimize the number of OLFF that may overwinter in the soil and emerge as adult flies in the following spring. Encourage your fellow industry farmers and nearby non-commercial growers to join in the fight against OLFF. Hopefully, growers who have abandoned their regular treatments and/or sanitation measures for OLFF control – perhaps due to the significant expense of the materials and labor, or the notion that it is no longer a significant pest – will resume these activities next season. If so, we should all be enjoying a more productive harvest this time next year.



Olive Trees



Olive fruit fly damage

The Hard Truth About Respirator Regulations

New respirator regulations implemented by the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) went into effect on January 1, 2008, and the implications have had a major impact on the agricultural industry, including grape growers. As such, it is important to determine if and how these regulations will affect your farming business.

Ask yourself the following questions: “Do I need to have a Respiratory Protection Program?” The answer depends on multiple factors. Do you apply pesticides with *labels* that require the use of a respirator? Do you have an *employment policy* that requires employees to use respirators during pesticide applications? If you are providing respirators on a *voluntary* basis, what type of respirator are you providing to your employees? It is your responsibility to know what is required, but remember that the Ag Commissioner’s Office is here to help you. We have a staff of knowledgeable biologists who can answer questions and point you in the right direction.



With the introduction of European Grapevine Moth, there has been an increase in the number and types of insecticides used throughout Napa County. Organic materials such as those containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), for example, specifically require the use of a respirator. Handling any pesticides with labels that require the use of a respirator mandates that you maintain a respiratory protection program.

Between 2012 and 2013, agricultural inspections revealed an increase in the number of non-compliances related to respiratory regulations, indicating the need for further outreach and discussion between industry and the Ag Commissioner’s Office. To address this issue, we held a training class last July to teach growers how to set up their respiratory protection programs.

County Ag Commissioners are required by enforcement response regulations to take the appropriate action based on the type of violation and the company’s compliance history. Violations will trigger an evaluation of the potential to create an adverse health, property, or environmental risk and may result in a compliance or enforcement action.

The bottom line is this: Figure out if your farming business needs to create a respiratory protection program and if the answer is yes, work to create a comprehensive program. Remember, we are here to help you. If you missed our July class and need assistance with your program, contact our office and we can provide the resources to help you get the job done. Let’s work together to comply with regulations and protect our workers.

PESTICIDE ENFORCEMENT - PESTICIDE USE VIOLATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE CIVIL PENALTIES IN NAPA COUNTY IN 2013

BUSINESS TYPE	VIOLATION TYPE	FINE AMOUNT
Grower	Employer-Employee Responsibilities	\$750.00
Grower	Respiratory Protection	\$500.00
Ag Pest Control Business	Respiratory Protection	\$850.00
Government Agency	Protection of Persons, Animals, and Property	\$3000.00 Overturned

NUMBERS OF COMPLIANCE ACTIONS ISSUED BY TYPE IN NAPA COUNTY IN 2013

Respiratory Protection Program	13	Pesticide Use Reporting	13
Decontamination Facility	6	Pest Control Business Reg./Licensing	6
Operator Identification Number	4	Personal Protective Equipment	4
Pesticide Handler Training	4	Pesticide Label Violation	4
Emergency Medical Care	3	Hazard Communication	2
Equipment Identification	2	Service Container Labeling	2
Fieldworker Training	1	Wellhead Protection	1
Notice of Applications	1	Pesticide Label Availability	1

Pesticide Handler Training: Not Just for Applicators

Traditionally, we think of a pesticide handler as the employee who is making a pesticide application. Are you also aware that, according to state regulations, any employee who helps mix or load pesticides is considered a handler, as well as any person involved in the maintaining, servicing, or repairing of equipment that contains a pesticide or pesticide residue?

The legal definition of the term “handle” may come as a surprise to some growers. It is defined as “mixing, loading, transferring, applying (including chemigation), or assisting with the application (including flagging) of pesticides, maintaining, servicing, repairing, cleaning, or handling equipment used in these activities that may contain residues, working with opened (including emptied but not rinsed) containers of pesticides.” In contrast, working with a pesticide container, spray tank, or backpack sprayer that has been thoroughly washed and tripled rinsed does not mean that someone is handling

pesticides because that equipment is then considered clean of any pesticides or pesticide residue.

Why is this important? As part of your pesticide safety program, you must conduct an annual training and maintain written records for all employees who handle pesticides. Presumably, your applicator knows what to do in the event of a pesticide exposure, but does your mechanic or repairman? It is just as important to train those workers in safety protocols and emergency procedures as you would your applicators.

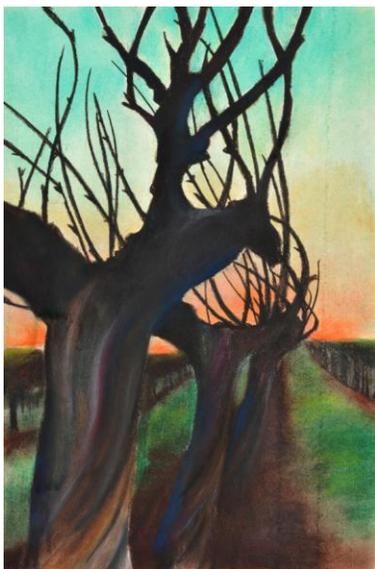
During the course of a records inspection, our agricultural biologists will scrutinize your records to see that every pesticide handler has been trained. How do you ensure that you are in compliance with the regulations? Invite all the necessary employees to your safety trainings, and on your documented employee pesticide safety training records, be sure to mark off all of the assigned job duties – applicator, serviceman/repairman, or mixer/loader – that apply.

The whole point of this discussion is to point out potential flaws in worker safety programs. It is important to be aware of what your requirements are as an employer. Ask yourself, “What is my goal here? Who am I trying to protect? What do I need to provide to my employees so they are as ready as possible in the event of a pesticide emergency?” Your number one goal should always be worker safety. Make sure you are covering all your bases by critically evaluating your handler training program with a broader lens.

For further information on Handler Training, see Title 3, California Code of Regulations (3CCR), Section 6724 <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/legbills/calcode/030302.htm#a6724>

For additional information on definition of terms, including “handle”, see 3CCR, Section 6000 <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/legbills/calcode/010101.htm#a6000>

2013 CROP REPORT COVER ART CONTEST



2012 Winner “Sleeping Vines”
by Haley Kastner

2012 marked the ninth year of the Napa County Agricultural Crop Report cover art contest. Vintage High School Junior Haley Kastner won first prize (\$250) for her soft pastel painting, “Sleeping Vines.” Trevor Hardee, a junior at New Technology High School, was the second prize winner (\$150); he submitted a photograph entitled “Grapes of Fall”. St. Helena High School Senior Melanie Gouveia took third place (\$100) with her water color painting, “Vineyards of the Valley.”

For this year’s contest, we are asking Napa County students in grades 6 thru 12 to submit reproducible artwork (photo, drawing, painting, collage, etc.) for judging. The submission must depict the theme of “Agriculture in Napa County, highlighting the increasing diversity of food crops being grown locally or the history of agriculture in Napa County.” The top three entries will be awarded monetary prizes – \$250 for first, \$150 for second, and \$100 for third – and the first-place piece will grace the cover of the 2013 crop report. By promoting this contest, we want to provide teachers with the means to include agriculture in their daily curriculum.

This year’s deadline for all art submissions is noon on December 31, 2013. For more specific information concerning the contest rules, refer to the contest fliers distributed to the schools, contact the Ag Commissioner’s Office at (707) 253-4357, or call the Farm Bureau’s “Ag in the Classroom” program at (707) 224-5403.

DOG TEAM ASSISTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INVASIVE PESTS AND DISEASES

Since the spring of 2007, the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office has partnered with the Contra Costa County Ag's canine team to detect unwanted pests and diseases. In this program, dogs are specifically trained to smell and detect flowers, fruit, plants, and other agricultural goods at such high-risk terminals as UPS, FedEx, and US Postal Service sectional centers. California law requires all such shipments to be conspicuously marked as containing plant material so that they may be inspected. Many packages never get marked, labels may fall off, or markings may be hidden. It is the job of the Dog Team to find packages that might otherwise be overlooked by human inspectors. The dog team program is funded in California by USDA APHIS through the "Early Pest Detection and Surveillance Program" authorized by the 2008 farm bill.

At the local UPS facility in Napa, a dog named Cairo can be seen running and sniffing his way through all the trucks while they are being loaded with packages, or you may spot him working on the moving conveyor belt "inspecting" all the packages passing by. When Cairo detects a package that contains plant material, he alerts his handler by scratching on the package. Those packages that Cairo identifies are then opened by a Napa County Agricultural Biologist and inspected thoroughly for any insects, other pests, and diseases that are of economic importance. Contra Costa County Ag Biologist Mariah deNihs is Cairo's owner, trainer, and handler.



Cairo not only sniffs out clearly marked boxes of *commercial* agricultural products, but he also has quite a nose for smelling *backyard* fruit and exotic plants. These "homegrown" items pose a very significant risk and are often sent in unmarked packages that would probably not even be considered for inspection. Mariah and Cairo spend much of their time inspecting packages at many terminals throughout Contra Costa and Alameda counties but still arrange their schedule to assist Napa County once a month. By participating in this program, we are able to help protect our agricultural industry by closing one significant pathway for potentially damaging pests – exotic insects and diseases that are not normally found in Napa County or that might affect California's \$36 billion a year agricultural industry.

Vine Mealybug Program Update

In 2012, staff in the Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's office trapped for vine mealybug (VMB) at a higher density – 25 traps per square mile – than we had in the past to determine how widespread VMB had become in the county. We inspected those traps last winter, and the results are shown on maps on our web page, <http://www.countyofnapa.org/AgCommissioner/VMB/>.

We found that the infestations had spread in Coombsville and North Napa and that VMB is widespread in Carneros. There also appears to be a VMB infestation in the southern part of Gordon Valley. We trapped throughout this summer in known infested areas outside of Carneros,



Adult female vine mealybug

and we began to deploy traps in late August in the rest of the county at a rate of 25 traps per square mile. We began removing the traps in late October and will examine them this winter, hopefully to find no new spread

of this pest.

Because of the new finds and the better information we have about the occurrence of VMB, we have changed portions of our VMB program. We have rescinded the VMB compliance agreements we had established with growers because the trapping data showed that the bugs are widespread in Carneros and other regions. We are not able to pinpoint where all the infestations are, and we suggest all growers in these areas to look for and manage VMB infestations. There are still large areas between Napa and Calistoga that do not have VMB, and we want to work with growers to keep it that way.

(Article continued on page 10)

Vine Mealybug Program Update

(Article continued from page 9)

In the past, the Napa County Winegrape Pest and Disease Control District funded a regional VMB mating disruption program at three locations. While this program was effective at managing VMB, the District could not provide enough mating disruption to cover all of the existing and newly infested vineyard sites.

This year, the Pest District approved a program to release VMB parasites at all known or potential areas of infestations. Outside of Carneros, we released *Anagyrus* wasps in every subgrid (1/25 of a square mile) where we had trapped more than 15 VMB males. In Carneros, we released wasps in every subgrid where we had trapped over 100 males. The

purpose of this program is to establish the presence of *Anagyrus* throughout the county where VMB occurs and to help prevent small infestations of VMB from growing larger. We have found *Anagyrus* parasitic activity in mealybugs in some of the areas where we released the wasps, and we



VMB parasitic wasp at work

will conduct more surveys next year to make sure that they have successfully overwintered and are becoming established in these areas. We will keep growers informed of any new finds and the progress of the parasite release program.

Beneficial insects are only one part of a successful VMB Integrated Pest Management program. To learn more about how to establish a comprehensive VMB program, you can obtain more information at our VMB web page, <http://www.countyofnapa.org/AgCommissioner/VMB/> and at UCCE Viticulture Farm Advisor Monica Cooper's web page, http://cenapa.ucanr.edu/Napa_County_Programs/Viticulture/Vine_Mealybug/

On-line Continuing Education Resources

For information about upcoming Continuing Education Classes, visit the California Department of Pesticide Regulation Web site: <http://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/license/conted.htm>

Here is a list of internet sites where you can take continuing education classes on-line. Two of the sites offer courses free of charge. The other sites charge a fee, and you will need to follow the payment process before taking courses and receiving credit.



This information is offered as a resource for QAL, QAC, PCA, and PAC license and certificate holders. The Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office does not endorse or offer any opinion as to the value of these services.

Paid sites:

Pestnetwork.com
<http://www.pestnetwork.com/>

Pesteducation.com
<http://www.pesteducation.com/default/>

American Institute of Pesticide Training
<http://www.aiptraining.com/Home-i-1-1.html>

P & L Marketing Inc.
<http://www.pesticideguides.com>

Free sites:

Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner
<http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/agce>

Western Farm Press
<http://westernfarmpress.com/ceu/>

Sudden Oak Death Update



For the third year in a row, the UC Berkeley Forest Pathology Lab organized its annual “Sudden Oak Death Blitz” in Northern California in an effort to pinpoint existing locations of the disease in both urban and woodland settings. Last June, the Napa Blitz, coordinated by local arborist Bill Pramuk, attracted 15 community volunteers who were first trained in recognizing the symptoms of the disease and then sent out to diverse areas of the county to collect evidence from suspect infected trees.

The participants returned with leaf samples from 54 bay laurel trees (the principal vector responsible for spreading the SOD pathogen to oak trees). Subsequent lab analyses determined that only four of the trees were infected with the pathogen – all in the same general

location off of Jameson Canyon Rd., and in *Solano County*, more than a mile east of the Napa/Solano county border. So, no new or repeat SOD finds were actually confirmed this year *within* Napa County.

Since 2000, when the first SOD surveys were conducted in this county, the pathogen has been confirmed on 67 sites (addresses), 39 of which were found during the 2011 and 2012 Napa Blitz events. Abundant research evidence indicates that SOD does not spread as much during dry or below normal rainfall years, as we experienced this past winter and spring, thus resulting in fewer finds.

Because county agriculture departments are no longer funded to carry out SOD surveys, we must now rely upon the efforts of events like the SOD Blitz to uncover new areas of infestation. The Napa County Agricultural Commissioner would like to commend and thank Bill Pramuk for his efforts to coordinate the local SOD Blitz. If you are interested in participating in the 2014 Napa SOD Blitz, contact Bill Pramuk at info@billpramuk.com. For general information on SOD, including a listing and photos of symptoms of over 125 plant species and genera affected by the disease, check out: www.suddenoakdeath.org.

Pesticide Container Recycling Event

On October 29, 2013, the Ag Commissioner’s Office held its 37th agricultural chemical container recycling day at the County corporation yard in Yountville. Since the program’s inception in 1994, the County has diverted over 370,000 pounds (185 tons) of plastic containers from landfills. For this most recent event, over 12,000 pounds of containers were collected from 75 participating growers, pest control businesses and agencies. The material was granulated on site by Interstate Ag Plastics, the authorized contractor.



The recycling event is free for all Napa County growers and businesses and is publicized at local agricultural supply retailers and through e-mail blasts by the Ag Commissioner and local industry groups. To be acceptable for recycling, plastic containers ranging in size from one quart to five gallons must be triple-rinsed and dry, with caps and loose labels removed. Barrels ranging from 15 to 55 gallons are also accepted, but must be cut into pieces as outlined in the flyers publicizing the events.

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INFORMATION**



Pesticide Container Recycling Event

(Article continued from page 11)

Growers may also bring in for recycling metal-caged 250-300 gallon totes used to store pesticides and fertilizers. To be acceptable for drop off, these containers must be intact and triple rinsed. Growers who have large numbers of these totes should contact the Ag Commissioner's Office about special arrangements for possible pickup by the recycling contractor. Thanks to everyone who has supported the program throughout the years and kept all that plastic out of the landfills.



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