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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT EXPANDS QUARANTINE AND WARNS CITIZENS OF THE RISK SHIPPING CITRUS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

This week, the Arizona Department of Agriculture quarantined two new areas of the state because of the Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP). The areas include an expansion of the existing Yuma quarantine into western Pima County and a new area around Nogales because of the increased detections of the pest.

ACP can carry a devastating disease called citrus greening disease or Huanglongbing (HLB). Fortunately HLB hasn't been found in the state yet, but it is edging closer to our state, threatening your backyard trees and the citrus industry.

Since 2006, HLB has cost Florida's economy an estimated \$3.36 billion in lost revenues and 6,611 jobs¹, and continues to threaten all citrus production areas of the U.S. and Mexico.

State quarantines restrict movement of potential carriers of the pest, and the state requires treatment of any commercial citrus groves or nursery where the ACP has been detected. We're also watching for the first signs of the disease statewide, because early detection gives us the best opportunity to Save Our Citrus.

It's that time of year when delicious Arizona citrus is ready for picking and we all love to share our citrus with family and friends, but you need to be careful when doing so.

Shipping citrus, especially fruit with attached leaves, is against the law if not washed, disinfected, inspected and certified. Citrus plants should never be shipped or taken out of the state, or brought into the state, unless properly safeguarded, inspected and certified.

You may think it's safe to send citrus to states that don't grow citrus, but shipments often are routed through citrus-growing states, putting them at risk.

You can receive citrus fruit from out of state safely, if safeguards are followed and a certificate or permit is issued by the origin state. If you want to purchase or receive fruit from out of state (gift fruit boxes, for example), you should buy only through approved vendors. Please check with the seller to make sure its shipments are certified and legal to ship to Arizona before purchasing.

The best way to buy citrus plants is through local nurseries and garden centers; they have the varieties that are best suited for Arizona's climate and soils. Buying online may be tempting, but you could be importing infested or infected citrus plants that could be devastating to your yard, your neighborhood and Arizona's citrus industry.

[1. Nordlie, Tom, University of Florida. \(January 26, 2012\). Citrus greening costs Florida \\$3.63 billion, 6,611 jobs. Southeastern Farm Press. http://southeastfarmpress.com/orchard-crops/citrus-greening-costs-florida-363-billion-6611-jobs](http://southeastfarmpress.com/orchard-crops/citrus-greening-costs-florida-363-billion-6611-jobs)