

Pest Update (February 12, 2014)

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Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of dying plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, instead please send a digital picture of the pest or problem. **Walnut samples may not be sent from any location – please provide a picture!**

Available on the net at:

<http://sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry/tree-pest-alerts/>

Any treatment recommendations, including those identifying specific pesticides, are for the convenience of the reader. Pesticides mentioned in this publication are generally those that are most commonly available to the public in South Dakota and the inclusion of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions and the label is the final authority for a product's use on a particular pest or plant. Products requiring a commercial pesticide license are occasionally mentioned if there are limited options available. These products will be identified as such but it is the reader's responsibility to determine if they can legally apply any product identified in this publication.

Timely topics

Emerald ash borer update..... 1
Which holds up better, red or yellow fruit on a crabapple?..... 3

Esamples

Lilac identification..... 3
What killed the maple?..... 4

Samples received

Perkins County (dying spruce)..... 4

Timely Topics

An excerpt from the *Pest Update*, Feb 24, 2004, almost ten years ago on the spread of emerald ash borer from Michigan into Indiana and Ohio.

“Considering the heavy reliance we have on ash in this state this is a real “wake-up” call to begin to diversify the landscape. This threat does not mean we should

stop planting ash all together. But it does mean we need to increase our planting of other species and genera. It may be many years, even decades, before the borer enters the state and we should use that time to diversify the landscape. Once it does arrive, the emerald ash borer may be controlled with treatments as we currently do for the native bronze birch borer, EAB's North American cousin, so for ornamental trees in town the threat may be minimized, but who is going to spray shelterbelts?"



We have gone the ten years without a discovery of emerald ash borer in our state. However, the losses in North America have increased from about six million trees to almost 60 million trees during this time period. Emerald ash borer was found in Minnesota about five years ago and is now confirmed in several locations in central Iowa. The day it is discovered on the Northern Plains states of Nebraska, North Dakota, and South

Dakota is probably not too far away. The last ten years have been well spent in preparing for the inevitable arrival of this insect. All three states have made an active effort to reduce their dependence on ash as an ornamental and windbreak species. I am seeing more oaks (*Quercus*), elms (*Ulmus*), and other species going into the urban landscapes and more hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) and Ussurian pear (*Pyrus ussuriensis*) being substituted for ash in windbreaks.

Our knowledge on managing an infestation has improved and no longer is the draconian policies of eliminating all the ash within a half mile radius of an infested tree in force. Recent research has shown the removal of ash surrounding a known infestation may only serve to accelerate the spread faster and farther. Policies are now focus on treatments more than removal and some of the best means of slowing the spread of the insect are applying systemic insecticides to ash within 1000 feet of the discovered infestation. Heavily infested trees can, and should be removed, since they are beyond successful treatment but this tactic is now limited to Labor Day to Memorial Day. Trees identified during the summer are now mostly noted and left standing until the flight period ends.

Treatment options have improved to the point tree owners can treat trees and have a high probability of success though most treatments require applications every two to three years. However we are not yet at the stage where treatments should be initiated in South Dakota. The recommendation is to hold off treatments until the insect is discovered in the county or the adjacent county to where the tree is located.

Our focus in South Dakota for 2014 will be detection. The sooner an infestation is discovered, the soon management tactics can be applied to slow the spread. The problem faced in Michigan was that the insect had been in the state for about 10 years before anyone associated the dieback and death of ash trees to this new pest. Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, and Iowa are among the states that discovered infestation that had only been established for several years and they have had good success at slowing the spread. **First Detector** programs on emerald ash borer will be offered again this summer throughout South Dakota to train interested citizens on how to identify and report a possible emerald ash borer infestation. Dates and locations will be announced through this publication later this spring.



Do you like your fruit red or yellow? I had an interesting question on yellow-fruited crabapples today. The email asked if I thought the yellow fruit was less ornamental than the red as the yellow fruits tend to turn brown after it freezes. I have seen this as a problem, but only on some cultivars and even on these it appears to be more of a problem if our freezes come in late autumn rather than winter. The crabapple pictured to the left, the Golden

Raindrops (*Malus* 'Schimidcutleaf'), for example has yellow fruits that seem to hold up well in our climate (though come to think of it, I did see a few trees out by Chadron that were hit by an early fall frost and the fruit had turned a mushy brown). So I agree in general with the statement but still would like to see more yellow fruited crabapples in the landscape and if we don't have early frosts many of them will remain yellow into the winter. However the safe bet is a red fruit for winter to spring fruit color.

E-samples



What is this bush? was a recent identification request. The plant, of course, is the common lilac, *Syringa vulgaris*, a very common shrub as the name implies. Common lilac is among our toughest shrubs and there are many abandoned homestead where all that remains is lilacs surrounding a partially filled in foundation. The plant is also appreciated for its fragrant spring flowers. When I was young we use to pick the

flowers for mom and she would place them in a vase on top of the television (yes, there was a time when you could set items on top of a TV, they were not always flat screen).



What killed my tree? Is a little tougher request. The picture shows a maple that was decayed and there is evidence of borers in the tree. But these borers, horntail wood wasps, are insects that attack dead and dying trees rather than being the reason for the tree's decline. What really killed the tree is not known, nor can be determined, by the picture. All we know is the borer took advantage of the weakened tree and set up

housekeeping for a few years. We have seen a lot of horntails in declining trees recently and this was discussed in the Sept 18-25, 2013 issue of the *Pest Update*.

Samples received

Perkin County
this Colorado blue spruce?

What is the cause of the decline of

The needles for the past two years were stunted and also clustered closer together than normal, a symptom often referred to as "bottlebrush". This is a common symptom for drought stress and while it may not be the only reason this tree is declining, it is certainly one of the chief reasons. This past year it was very common to see one tree decline due to drought stress yet the adjacent trees faring well.