

Tree Talk

New Exotic Wood-Boring Pests Found in U.S.

The Animal and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS) issued a national recall on pinecones and potpourri originating in India. The pinecones are sold both singly and in potpourri style (bagged or boxed). Two different insects have been found in these products: *Chlorophorus strobilicola*, a wood-boring beetle native to India, and larvae of a seed-feeding moth belonging to the genus *Cydia*. These pests have never been known to exist in the United States. In India, the beetles have decimated pine tree populations, feeding on the cones and limiting pine tree production.

As of December 12, 2003, numerous product codes have been recalled and that number continues to rise as state and federal inspectors locate additional products. Pinecones infested with live insects have been found in at least 11 states, including New Jersey, New York, Maryland, and Delaware. The recall applies to infested pine cones sold in Target, Wal-Mart, JoAnn Fabrics, Lowe's, Dollar Tree, Safeway Frank's Nursery, and K-mart stores nationwide.

Potpourri and pinecones with any indication of insect activity should be double-bagged and tied securely, and then placed in the freezer for a minimum of 2 days. After that time, the bags can be disposed of in the trash.

Pinecones recalled will be destroyed in an APHIS-supervised procedure. APHIS will now require mandatory fumigation for all pinecones from India entering US ports of entry. Products packaged in impermeable wrappers will be refused entry unless they are removed from the packaging to allow effective treatment.

Along with these two new pests, in 2002, the emerald Ash borer (EAB) was discovered in Michigan in 2002 and Ohio in 2003. Native of Asia, EAB probably entered the U.S. in solid wood packing material such as boxes, crates, etc., along port of entries. This borer quickly attacks and kills species of Ash trees (Green, Black, Mongolian, White) and does not care whether the trees are healthy or ailing.

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