



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**NATIONAL CITRUS INSTITUTE TO EDUCATE HOMEOWNERS ON
CRITICAL CITRUS THREAT**

San Bernardino, Calif. — Oct. 27, 2010 — A dangerous pest is making its way through California, threatening the ability of homeowners to grow citrus in their backyards. The pest, called the Asian Citrus Psyllid, has sparked quarantines in Southern California, including the counties of Imperial, San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles. The insect can be a carrier of a fatal tree disease, called Huanglongbing, also known as HLB or citrus greening disease. Together, the psyllid and the HLB disease have already caused devastation in Asia, India, parts of the Middle East, and South and Central America, and are currently ravaging the citrus industry in the state of Florida.

Educating homeowners on how to inspect citrus for the Asian Citrus Psyllid is one topic of a full day of seminar sessions that will be presented at the National Citrus Institute at the National Orange Show Events Center in San Bernardino on November 16. The institute, a permanent feature of the National Orange Show since 1919, is designed to educate local citrus growers on the industry's latest information, innovations, and

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updates. In the past, the institute has been an invitation-only conference for citrus growers in Southern California, however, due to the serious threat to all citrus imposed by Asian Citrus Psyllid, the conference audience has been expanded to include any party interested in citrus, including homeowners.

While the psyllids in California have not been found to be carrying the HLB disease, the Citrus Research Board, a primary organizer of the Citrus Institute, is reminding homeowners that we all play a critical role in keeping the disease out of California.

“The best way to protect California citrus is to inspect for the pest,” said Ted Batkin, president of the California Citrus Research Board, and a presenter at the National Citrus Institute. “We want to encourage homeowners to do their part before it’s too late.”

The National Citrus Institute is offering the following tips to homeowners:

- Inspect your citrus trees each month or whenever watering, spraying, pruning or tending trees. It is especially important to inspect during active growth or flushing.
- Plant only California-grown, certified trees that are known to be free of the disease.
- Don't move plants out of the quarantined area, because they might be carrying psyllids.
- Dry out plant clippings for two weeks before putting them in green waste recycle bins or double bag clippings to avoid moving psyllids.

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- If you think you have found a psyllid, act fast. Time is critical. Call the California Department of Food and Agriculture hotline at 800-491-1899.

For more information on registering for the National Citrus Institute call the National Orange Show Events Center at (909) 888-6788 ext. 410 or visit www.nosevents.com. Registration is \$40 and lunch is included.

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