

STATE WARNS PUBLIC TO BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR *SPOTTED LANTERNFLY*



The spotted lanternfly is threatening to spread from southeastern Pennsylvania and could wreak even more havoc than last year's pest, the ash borer.

According to the Department of Agriculture, the spotted lanternfly poses a significant threat to the grape, apple, and stone fruit industries, worth nearly \$175 million, as well as the state's \$12 billion hardwood industry.

Municipalities in the quarantined counties (see below) have been asked to alert residents and post signs and information about how to recognize the spotted lanternfly. The goal is to minimize the risk of the insect leaving the quarantined area.

Given that insects don't recognize quarantines, it is a good idea to get educated about this invasive species and watch for its arrival in your community.

HOW TO IDENTIFY THE PEST

The spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*, is an invasive plant hopper native to China, India, and Vietnam.

The insect was first detected in Pennsylvania in Berks County in Fall 2014 and spread to Bucks, Chester, Lehigh, Montgomery, and Northampton counties. To try to control its spread, the state extended the quarantine area to include Carbon, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Monroe, Philadelphia, and Schuylkill counties. The bug has also been seen in Delaware, New York, and Virginia.

PA Department of Agriculture says that adult lanternflies are about an inch long and a half-inch wide at rest. The lanternfly's forewing is gray with black spots, and the wingtips have a net-like appearance in black and gray. The hind wings have contrasting patches of red and black with a white band between them. The legs and head are black, and the abdomen is yellow with broad black bands. Immature stages, called nymphs, are first black with

white spots and then develop red patches as they grow.

Lanternflies prefer the plant called Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima* — another invasive species in PA — as their primary food source and mating and egg-laying location. However, any smooth surface, from trees to vehicles, campers, yard furniture, farm equipment, and other items stored outside can act as sites for egg laying. Adult lanternflies begin laying eggs in late September and continue through late November or early December.

WHAT TO DO

Anyone who observes spotted lanternflies beyond the quarantined counties should try to destroy them.

Because insecticides may kill beneficial insects, including pollinators, on infected trees, property owners should consider using the integrated pest management strategy that the state is using. It involves locating Tree of Heaven plants, killing all but a few to act as "trap trees" to attract the lanternflies, and then treating those with a systemic insecticide to eradicate the pests.

As an added step, Gov. Tom Wolf has created the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council. This advisory panel of 17 state and non-governmental agencies will identify invasive species that currently or could threaten the state's natural and agricultural resources and the industries they support.

To learn more about these pests, go to the Department of Agriculture's website, www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly, and check out information available from the Penn State Extension at <https://extension.psu.edu/shopby/spotted-lanternfly>.

To learn how to identify Tree of Heaven, go to www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly, click on the "Program Information" box, and choose "Ailanthus Identification" in the list of publications on the right.