

MEDIA CONTACT John Russo, StopTheSpray.ORG
(831) 440-8935
john@stopthespray.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 19, 2008

Statewide Grassroots Movement Victorious in Stopping the Spray

California Department of Food and Agriculture Backs-off Plan to Aerially Spray Millions of People with Pesticides

June 19, 2008 – Carmel Valley, California. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced today a fundamental change of heart concerning the campaign to eradicate the Light-Brown Apple Moth (LBAM).

In a conference call with environmental and citizen groups, Secretary A. G. Kawamura confirmed that aerial spraying of pesticides is off the table in all urban areas. He went on to say that this includes all areas that are accessible by road: If there are roads, CDFA considers it an urban area.

Says John Russo, founder of StopTheSpray.ORG: “The research, websites, community outreach, lawsuits, and lobbying done by thousands of ordinary citizens from Pacific Grove to Sonoma created the pressure that made this possible. This is an extraordinary example how people can come together, get involved, and make a difference. A significant threat to ourselves and our environment has been eliminated.”

After aerial spraying in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties last fall resulted in hundreds of health complaints and environmental damage, the groundswell of public outcry against the moth spraying has grown steadily.

“This success is a major inspiration for us all to fight against other chemical trespasses and spray programs by the state and private industry” says Russo. “Together, we can do it.”

###

About Stop The Spray

Stop The Spray (www.stopthespray.org) is a grass-roots movement that was founded by John Russo in October of 2007, as a public response to massive aerial sprayings of thousands of people on the Monterey Peninsula. The focus of the movement is on the people’s right to information and the demand for their consent prior to any spraying program that directly exposes their bodies to toxins. As of June 19th, 2008 the petition started by **Stop The Spray** has been signed by 29,211 people. **Stop The Spray** has organizations throughout the entire Bay Area, East Bay, San Mateo, and Marin.

StopTheSpray.org is currently evaluating ballot initiatives and other measures necessary to curtail the power of the Department of Food and Agriculture to endanger the health and human rights of people in California. To view or sign the online petition opposing pesticide spraying without consent and to read more about the issue please visit: www.stopthespray.org

Proposed Legislation

AB 2763 (Laird - D) Requires the Department of Food and Agriculture to create a list of invasive animals, plants, and insects that have a reasonable likelihood of entering California for which an eradication program might be appropriate, and hold public hearings on this information.

AB 2765 (Huffman - D) sets new limits on the emergency powers of the Department of Agriculture. The bill requires a public hearing to receive testimony and examine alternatives to aerial spraying prior to any decision to spray.

AB 2760 (Leno - D) would require that an Environmental Impact Report be completed before the CDFA can apply pesticide in an urban area for the eradication of the light brown apple moth.

About Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM)

The Light-brown Apple Moth (LBAM) was officially discovered in California in 2007 although it may have been in residence in the state for up to 30 years. The CDFA declared an administrative emergency, established quarantine zones and launched a multi-million dollar eradication program. The eradication program, which includes residential and urban areas, is at least in part motivated by international trade issues. Of particular concern is that the chemicals used have never been tested for use on humans and have never before been applied on such a large scale and over human populations. Long-term effects on human health and the environment are unknown and highly controversial, and over 640 health complaints have been identified. The CDFA aerial spray campaign is scheduled to resume and expand into the larger Bay Area in the summer of 2008 with monthly applications until the total eradication of the moth – deemed impossible by most experts – until at least 2010.