



Asian Gypsy Moth – Urgent

July 2012

In the past several weeks United States and Canadian authorities have intercepted a large number of commercial marine vessels with live Asian gypsy moth (AGM) egg masses on the superstructures of ships and cargo. The pace of these interceptions during the past few weeks is alarming to US and Canadian inspection agencies.

We are receiving information that this year high numbers of AGM adults are flying in some port areas at time of pre-departure inspections. Inspection certificates indicate large numbers of egg masses have been removed and crews report removing hundreds of egg masses post certification. In some cases, certification is issued many days prior to ship departure allowing for re-infestation.

These events pose high risks for spreading this pest in North American and require that infested vessels be ordered into international waters for cleaning or to be rerouted to ports outside the United States and Canada. In all cases, delays in cargo loading or discharging activities and in routine clearance have been significant and result in the loss of revenue to the shipping line and associated parties. The vessels are unable to conduct cargo operations, miss cargo charters, and experience significant schedule delays.

Many of these vessels that have required pre-departure certification from Japan, Korea, or China that document the removal and destruction of all AGM egg masses and other life stages prior to port arrival in the United States and Canada are still arriving with live egg masses. In cases of heavy infestation for 2012, certification is not proving adequate. Vessels moving goods to the United States and Canada that are subjected to high infestation should consider additional methods to preclude egg masses. Effective vessel self-inspections may be an option to ensure that no egg masses remain on board the vessel prior to arrival in the U.S. and Canada. The economic impact of inadequate preparation is very high.

High-risk moth flight occurs especially during night operations for cargo loading and unloading. Bright lights attract the female gypsy moths to the vessels. The periods of risk for Asian gypsy moth flight and infestation range from May 25 to August 10 in southern Japan and July 1 to September 30 in northern Japan and Far East Russia. The period of risk for northern China and Korea is June 1 until September 30.

.../2



The shipping industry has improved markedly with increased awareness of necessary quarantine compliance for AGM. This has been vital to maintaining shipping schedules. Both countries are committed to working with industry to support measures that will reduce AGM risk at origin. U.S. and Canadian officials seek increased collaboration with shipping lines, agents, and associations in order to try to minimize these events with support of port monitoring and vessel pre-inspection techniques.

The following measures are required:

Asian gypsy moth interception season on commercial vessels at U.S. and Canadian ports concerns ships which have called on ports in CHINA; KOREA; JAPAN, & Far East RUSSIA ANYTIME during period of MAY through SEPTEMBER.

ACTIONS:

1. Vessels must obtain pre-departure certification and forward a copy of the CERTIFICATION that the vessel is free of Asian Gypsy Moth life stages to their U.S or Canadian agents. The inspections should be performed as close to departure time from the regulated port as possible.
2. Shipping lines to perform intensive vessel self-inspections to look for, remove (scrape off), and properly destroy all egg masses and other life stages of AGM prior to entering U.S. and Canadian ports to avoid facing inspection delays, re-routing and other potential impacts associated with mitigating the risk on entry to North America.

All vessels should, five days prior to the vessel's arrival at its first US or Canadian port, perform their own comprehensive self-inspection according to the GYPSY MOTH INSPECTION POCKET GUIDE and confirm to the agents whether their vessel is free of any infestation. Additional images of recent detections are also available and are attached.

3. At least two days prior to the vessel's arrival to please forward to agent a copy of the vessel's voyage memo in order agents may provide to the local U.S. and Canadian inspectors an opportunity to review the vessel's history of ports and dates.

It is the responsibility of the shipping lines to meet all requirements for entry to the US and Canada for freedom from AGM and other pest concerns. This is turning into a season where AGM populations in Northeast Asia are considered to be high. We strongly urge maritime interests to take all possible precautions.



APHIS Protecting American Agriculture
Equal Opportunity Employer

Canada