



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

A. G. Kawamura, Secretary

November 2, 2007

Dear Property Owner:

We want to bring to your attention pilot error that occurred during the recent treatments of the Monterey Peninsula for a Light Brown Apple Moth infestation. On September 13 and October 24, 25 and 26; very brief periods of extra treatment occurred that amounted to mere seconds. Your property was treated with moth pheromone on one of those dates.

A computerized navigation system helped us to detect this pilot error. We have contacted our contractor—who employs the pilots—and have issued clear instructions that the error in question should not happen again.

The pilot error occurred in sparsely populated or unpopulated areas to the north and to the east of the treatment area.

We are dedicated to running this program with the utmost care and attention and are cooperating with the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner's office as it reviews the incident for possible enforcement action.

The pheromone, an odorless material called Checkmate LBAM-F, has been reviewed and approved by the U.S. EPA and California Department of Pesticide Regulation; and has been accepted for use by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Forestry.

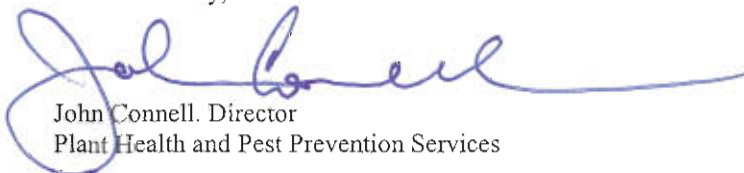
While conventional insecticides are designed to kill insects, pheromones are designed to confuse them so they cannot breed. In nature, female moths release the pheromone to attract a mate. The "scent" is undetectable to humans and is highly specific to the light brown apple moth; it does not affect other kinds of insects or animals. Toxicologists have stated that the pheromone shows no evidence of toxicity to people, pets or plants; and that humans are unable to react to or even recognize insect pheromones. As for the moth population: it will decline and collapse as the rate of breeding slows and eventually subsides.

The light brown apple moth is of particular concern because it can damage a wide range of crops and other plants, including the Central Coast's prized cypress as well as redwoods, oaks and many other varieties commonly found in our urban and suburban landscaping, public parks and natural environment. The complete "host list" contains well over 1,000 plant species and more than 250 fruits and vegetables.

Eradication of the LBAM is of the utmost importance to the state of California in order to protect our environment and food supply from this invasive pest. We appreciate your understanding. We will do everything possible to keep residents informed of the steps we are taking to rid this invasive pest from our environment.

If you have questions, please call Larry Bezark of my staff at 916-653-5506.

Yours sincerely,



John Connell, Director
Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services

