

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2022-11
March 8, 2022

Subject: Citrus Canker in York County, South Carolina
To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

On February 17, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Plant Pathogen Confirmatory Diagnostics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland, confirmed the identification of citrus canker in Meyer lemon (*Citrus meyeri*) and Key lime (*Citrus aurantifolia*) plant samples from a nursery in York County, South Carolina.

Citrus canker causes fruit and leaves to drop prematurely, and results in lesions on citrus leaves, stems, and fruit. The disease affects all citrus varieties and is caused by the bacterial pathogen *Xanthomonas citri* subsp. *citri* (synonym *X. axonopodis* pv. *citri*). The bacterium is not harmful to humans or animals. The disease is found throughout Florida, in limited areas of Louisiana and Texas, and was recently confirmed in Alabama.

APHIS and the South Carolina Department of Agriculture are working with the South Carolina nursery to destroy the citrus plants in the nursery. This action is necessary to prevent the spread of citrus canker.

Also, between August 5, 2021, and February 17, 2022, the nursery sold potentially infected citrus plants to customers throughout the United States through online sales. No nurseries received these plants. The South Carolina nursery sent letters to all customers who may have received potentially infected citrus plants. APHIS is working with state partners to collect and destroy citrus plants shipped to customers in 11 states, including Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington. These immediate measures are focused on protecting the citrus industry. More information on citrus canker can be found at:

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/citrus-canker>

For additional information regarding the citrus canker program, you may contact Shailaja Rabindran, Director of Specialty Crops and Cotton Pests at (301) 851-2167.



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