

The Honorable Sam Farr
U.S. House of Representatives
1221 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0517

Dear Congressman Farr:

Thank you for your letter of February 28, 2008, concerning aerial distribution of a pheromone as part of our effort to eradicate the light brown apple moth (LBAM) infestation in Santa Cruz County and other areas of California. I have asked the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to provide the enclosed information in response to your inquiry.

In following up on your suggestion during the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on February 13, 2008, that we meet with public health service officials, we have contacted the U.S. Surgeon General and the Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding the plan to eradicate LBAM. While the officials of these agencies recognize our interest in working with them, they ultimately deferred to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as the lead agency on matters involving pheromone materials and other products registered as pesticides. We will continue to work closely with EPA to ensure that the LBAM eradication program is carried out in compliance with all applicable Federal and State environmental statutes.

I appreciate your input and support on this issue and hope that the enclosed information assures you of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's strong commitment to protecting public and environmental health while carrying out LBAM eradication activities in California.

Sincerely,

Edward T. Schafer

Secretary