

The summer months in the United States and Canada bring about concerns regarding infestation from ships inadvertently carrying the Asian gypsy moth. U.S. and Canadian officials are actively intercepting infested vessels and advise Members take preventative measures as appropriate.

We would also like to bring to attention the website [www.asiangypsymoth.org](http://www.asiangypsymoth.org). This website was created as a resource to help prevent the movement of the Asian gypsy moth in international trade by providing the latest information available.

## THE ASIAN GYPSY MOTH INFESTATION SEASON IS UPON US



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United States and Canadian authorities have intercepted live Asian gypsy moth (AGM) egg masses on an unprecedented number of commercial vessels calling on west coast ports in 2008. This number has not been experienced since the early 1990s. Ten of these events were severe enough to consider vessels significantly infested resulting in the vessels being ordered into international waters. In all cases, delays in cargo loading and in routine clearance were significant. This has resulted in the loss of revenue, as the vessels were unable to conduct cargo operations, missed cargo charters, and have experienced significant schedule delays. These incidents can be avoided by adherence to strict sanitation standards involving the removal and destruction of all AGM egg masses prior to port arrival in the United States and Canada.

This situation is a very serious pest concern that could result in widespread pest infestations in U.S. and Canadian forests in a relatively short time. These recent events are leading U.S. and Canadian officials to believe that AGM populations in seaport areas in Japan and other parts of northeast Asia have risen dramatically and will continue into 2009. It is imperative that industry representatives collaborate with the United States and Canadian authorities on measures closely to reduce these incidents as soon as possible.

Both Canada and the US are aware that the shipping industry is interested in quarantine compliance and maintaining schedules. Both countries are committed to working with industry to support measures that will reduce AGM risk at origin.

Reports of swarms of moths at various ports in Japan and elsewhere where AGM exists have been received. Moth flight occurs especially during night operations for cargo loading and unloading. Bright lights attract the gypsy moths to the vessels. The periods of risk for Asian gypsy



**Eggs can be found in places you won't necessarily see onboard ship.**



**Eggs are found almost anywhere aboard...**



**...they are found on howser rope and...**



**...inside and outside of cargo holds.**



**Egg stage of the Asian gypsy moth.**



**Larvae stage of the Asian gypsy moth.**



**Pupa stage of the Asian gypsy moth.**



**Adult stage of the Asian gypsy moth.**

moth flight and infestation range from June 1–August 15 in southern Japan to July 15–October 1 in northern Japan and far east Russia. China and Korea have similar flight periods of risk.

U.S. and Canadian officials share the belief that a major AGM population spike may be occurring in Japan and China, as Russia has experienced the past two years. We also suspect that this may be occurring in Korea and China. Populations of gypsy moth worldwide are known to spike almost simultaneously, within 1–2 years of each other. Populations then decline for a couple of years before later collapsing.

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.

It will be necessary for shipping lines to order all vessel crews to conduct intensive vessel inspection to remove (scrape off) and destroy all egg masses prior to entering U.S. and Canadian ports. The egg masses can be found anywhere on the vessel superstructure and anywhere that doors were open while in port. Locations include barrel containers used for trash or liquid.

Egg masses may also found on the lines used to moor the vessel to the dock, extra lines laying on the deck, very high on the vessel super structure, on air intake vents, vessel smoke stack, on the tracks used for crane movement, on the outside hull, on a container stored on the deck, and inside a wheel/tool house or room on the aft deck. The egg masses will also be seen throughout the vessel meaning on the aft deck, starboard and port sides of the deck and housing, on the bow, and on the main deck and upper decks of the main super structure, cargo hold framing, and other vessel framing including safety rails. The outside of containers must also be inspected.

In significant infestations in 2008, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspectors have detained vessels with 50 to over 100 live viable egg masses located throughout the ship. Each egg mass can contain several hundred eggs. Please note that this includes bulk cargo, grain and container vessels, as well as fishing vessels and cruise ships. Vessels found infested by US or Canadian authorities are not authorized to load or unload cargo until they are free of AGM life stages (egg masses, live larvae, and live adults).

Due to North American coordination to prevent entry of this pest, vessels are informed that they cannot redirect to Canada or Mexico, but can choose to proceed to other foreign locations.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) officials are not recommending avoidance of any foreign port. However, due to these extreme conditions, we are recommending that vessels transiting in far east Russia and Japan during designated periods maintain compliance by obtaining certification prior to departure from these countries. In addition, all vessels calling on China and Korea must insist on high levels of vigilance and self inspection to ensure that no egg masses remain on board the vessel when it arrives in the US and Canada. The consequences of inadequate preparation are very high.

The purpose of this message is to warn maritime shippers that we have an emerging problem. Please disseminate this information to your membership. Thank you for your help in providing information to the shipping industry. USDA and CFIA officials will work with industry to produce information on AGM specific to vessel sanitation to support collaboration and minimize vessel clearance time at US and Canadian maritime ports.

Please contact the officials listed below for further information or questions.

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