



The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station

123 HUNTINGTON STREET, P.O. BOX 1106, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06504

*Putting Science to Work for Society
Protecting Agriculture, Public Health, and the Environment*

Founded 1875

Testimony in Support for Raised Bill No. 867
An Act Concerning the Enforcement of Firewood Transport
February 13, 2015

The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) supports Raised Bill No. 867 to add a mail-in infraction/violation schedule to the existing authority of the Director of CAES and the Director's designee under CGS 22-84 in the regulation of firewood transported into and within Connecticut. The transport of firewood is a proven vector for spreading destructive insects, such as the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) and Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), which kill their host trees.

The emerald ash borer was first detected in Prospect, CT on July 16, 2012. New Haven County was quarantined on August 9, 2012. Temporary firewood regulations went into effect at the same time and on December 28, 2012, permanent firewood regulations were established to reduce the risk of introducing other invasive wood-boring insects into Connecticut. Fairfield, Litchfield, and Hartford Counties were quarantined for EAB on August 29, 2013. With the detection of the beetle into Middlesex and New London Counties, the state quarantine for EAB was expanded to all of Connecticut, essentially dropping the internal quarantine, on December 5, 2014. At this time, this insect has been detected in 43 towns in 6 counties in Connecticut. Connecticut was added to the federal quarantine for EAB on February 9, 2015.

The nearest infestation of the Asian longhorned beetle is in Worcester County, Massachusetts with the federal quarantine currently encompassing 110 square miles in all or portions of 6 towns (Worcester, West Boylston, Boylston, Holden, Shrewsbury, and Auburn). There have been 23,207 infested trees detected and 34,323 infested host trees and 10,512 high risk host trees removed. Eradication efforts have been highly successful, but a few beetles continue to be detected and the ALB program continues to remove and destroy infested trees. This insect will remain a potential threat to Connecticut's forests.

In 2013, 27 EAB or firewood permits were issued for the transport of regulated articles by CAES, 16 of which were for the intrastate movement of regulated ash or articles under the guidelines of the EAB quarantine. In 2014, 36 permits were issued, 2 were for intrastate movement of regulated articles related to the EAB quarantine and most of the permits were for the transport of firewood into Connecticut originating in Massachusetts, but also from New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island that were considered of low risk. Some permits were renewals of existing permits.

Efforts to reduce the risk of spreading or introducing destructive forest pests continue to be important. The total impact of EAB in Connecticut remains unclear, but will involve the cost of removing hazardous ash trees from municipal, state and private property, the treatment of ash trees, and ecological costs. Ash makes up 3-5 % of our forests and also is a common urban tree in many towns. As an example of the costs incurred due to EAB in one community, Onondaga County, NY (Syracuse, NY) plans to issue bonds to pay for the first \$1 million to begin removing and replacing 44,000 ash trees. Most (23,459) are along county roads. Another 2,300 trees will be treated. The total cost is estimated to be \$13.5 million

Phone: (203) 974-8500 Fax: (203) 974-8502
Toll Free: 1-(877) 855-2237
WWW.CT.GOV/CAES

An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

(Emerald Ash Borer Bi-Weekly Report, USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Vol. 7(2):1 - January 2015). The proposed infraction option will enhance the state's ability to prevent the introduction or spread of federal or state regulated forest pests and enforceability of non-documented firewood transported into and within Connecticut.

Kirby C. Stafford III, Ph.D.
Chief Scientist, State Entomologist
Department of Entomology

Phone: 203-974-8485
Email: Kirby.Stafford@ct.gov

Phone: (203) 974-8500 Fax: (203) 974-8502
Toll Free: 1-(877) 855-2237
WWW.CT.GOV/CAES
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer