

# News Release

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE



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## Updated Strategy to Eradicate Apple Moth Infestation Protects Agriculture, Environment and Economy



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### *Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) Strengthens Eradication Effort*

SACRAMENTO, Friday, June 20, 2008 - CDFA Secretary A.G. Kawamura today issued the following statement:

“Both California and federal officials are committed to eradicating the light brown apple moth infestation using the best, safest means available. When we protect agriculture from invasive pests, we are also protecting our food supply, our environment and our economy. Farmers are our society’s original innovators, and that innovation has provided a better alternative to help us eradicate the apple moth.

“Since we discovered the light brown apple moth (LBAM) in California in early 2007, we have invested in the development of alternatives that would improve our eradication efforts. That work is bearing fruit earlier than expected. We are fast-tracking an approach known as the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT), in which large quantities of sterilized, infertile insects are released so that the wild population cannot reproduce.

“SIT has been successful for more than 30 years in California and around the globe against a variety of insects—most famously the Medfly. Scientists had expected to need 5-7 years to adapt SIT to the apple moth, but their work has progressed much more rapidly than expected. We now plan to begin limited releases of the sterile moths in 2009, with a full-scale program up and running in 2011. This is exactly the kind of effort and innovation that Californians deserve from their public servants.”

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*The California Department of Food and Agriculture protects and promotes California's \$31.8 billion agricultural industry. California's farmers and ranchers produce a safe, secure supply of food, fiber and shelter; marketed fairly for all Californians; and produced with responsible environmental stewardship.*

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