

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2015-35
June 24, 2015

Subject: Detection of South American Palm Weevil (*Rhynchophorus palmarum*) in Arizona
To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

On May 20, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of a dead South American palm weevil (SAPW; *Rhynchophorus palmarum*) in Yuma, Arizona. The dead adult SAPW was found on the ground near a palm weevil trap. This is the first detection in Arizona, and it resulted from a monitoring survey that responded to earlier detections of SAPW along the U.S. southern border in California in 2011 and in Texas in 2012.

APHIS is working with the Arizona Department of Agriculture (ADA) to continue monitoring surveys of this pest. Previous survey efforts have detected SAPW in Southern California, in Baja Mexico, and in South Texas. Incursions of this weevil into the southern United States can happen, as SAPW can fly long distances.

SAPW, which is one of several giant palm weevils of the genus *Rhynchophorus*, is native to Central and South America and is an important pest of palms, specifically date and coconut palms. Sugarcane is also a host for this pest. Although SAPW spreads the nematode *Bursaphelenchus cocophilus* (which can cause red-ring disease in coconut and oil palms), the nematode was absent in this detected weevil.

Additional information on SAPW and the nematode *Bursaphelenchus cocophilus* is at:
<<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/palm-weevil>> or by calling APHIS National Emergency Response Coordinator Eileen Smith at 301-851-2155.

/s/

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