

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2012-22
June 15, 2012

SUBJECT: Detection of South American Palm Weevil (*Rhynchophorus palmarum*) in Texas

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On May 3, 2012, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed the detection of South American palm weevil (SAPW), *Rhynchophorus palmarum*, in Alamo, Texas. This detection was the result of a multi-state delimitation survey initiated in response to detections of SAPW in California in 2011.

On May 11, 2012, a second SAPW was detected in the same general geographic area of Alamo, Texas. Both detections were found within 5 miles of the U.S.-Mexico border. APHIS is working closely with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and Texas A&M University to survey the area of concern to determine the extent of the distribution and next steps.

SAPW, which is one of three 'giant' palm weevils of the genus *Rhynchophorus*, is native to Central and South America and is considered an important pest of palms, specifically date and coconut palms. Sugarcane is also considered a host for this pest. Although SAPW is a vector of the nematode, *Bursaphelenchus cocophilus*, which can cause red-ring disease in coconut and oil palms, the nematode, was not present in the detected weevils.

Additional information on *Rhynchophorus palmarum* or *Bursaphelenchus cocophilus* can be found at: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/palmweevil/index.shtml or by contacting Eileen Smith, APHIS National Emergency Response Coordinator, at (301) 851-2155.

/s/ Osama El-Lissy for

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