

Citrus Disease Quarantine Expanded in Texas

McALLEN, Texas (AP) — The state Department of Agriculture has expanded a quarantine area to slow the spread of the citrus greening disease for two South Texas counties.

The agency this week advised Cameron and Hidalgo counties that the movement of citrus plants and plant materials will be restricted.

The agency's first citrus greening quarantine came in January 2012 and included a 5-mile radius around infected trees in San Juan. Monday's announcement represents the fifth expansion.

The bacterium is carried from an infected tree to healthy ones by the Asian citrus psyllid (SIL'-ed), a tiny brown insect that showed up in Florida in 1998. The bacterium spreads through an infected tree's vascular system. Trees produce smaller fruit that drops to the ground prematurely, and eventually the trees die.

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