

### **Citrograph asks:** How are you dealing with the actions imposed as a result of the Asian citrus psyllid finds?



Cooperatively. We had our first psyllid find a little over three years ago here in the Desert, and each year since we have been dealing with and adapting to many different protocol and quarantine boundary changes. We have mechanically “de-leafed” our fruit, at a cost of \$6 - \$8 per bin; we have lost 10% to 15% grade doing this, costing growers over \$700/acre. We have signed hundreds of compliance agreements, had thousands of load inspections, and spent millions of dollars doing so. We are still, unfortunately, faced with many new commercial grove finds and thousands of residential finds in our nearby cities and Mexico. I think Southern California growers that have lived this the last three years are quickly moving ahead, understanding that what we are really dealing with is a very prolific mobile pest that we are currently unable to successfully trap or treat with 100% cooperation from our neighbors. We are dealing with large psyllid populations  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away from our groves, knowing we must try to maintain the lowest numbers possible. We are optimistic for biocontrol, but currently we are adding additional nutritional sprays and incorporating suppressive psyllid materials with them in both our conventional and organic groves, hoping that preemptive efforts within our control will yield more positive solutions than what have been imposed so far. – **Craig Armstrong, Owner, Thermiculture Management LLC**



Booth Ranches, LLC owns citrus groves located in the Strathmore and Terra Bella ACP restricted areas. As such, our company has sought to adhere to the new CDFA and USDA regulations through various means and methods, including completing required documentation and logistics to participate in field cleaning or pretreatment to insure fruit marketability, as well as cooperating on a volunteer basis with areawide winter treatments for ACP. The grower meetings in late 2012 clarified the restrictions that growers with affected groves now strive to conform with. Our company acted quickly, first by registering through the Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner to move field-cleaned fruit and later by registering for the pre-harvest field treatment program as a means of ensuring the ability to move and market fruit from groves in the ACP restricted areas. In addition, we recently have utilized the option of outsourcing fruit within a restricted area to a packinghouse within that area, as a means of compliance with regulations. Booth Ranches, LLC has also opted to cooperate with the areawide treatments for ACP, although we have no groves within the current mandatory treatment zone. Through discussions with areawide treatment coordinators, our company decided that involvement in the preventative treatments to assure the eradication of any undetected overwintering ACP in the area would be the plan of action most benefitting the industry at large. – **Melissa O'Neal, Agricultural Entomologist/Pest Control Advisor, Booth Ranches LLC**



Until recently, ACP finds in Ventura County have been found (with a few exceptions) mostly in residential settings in the eastern portions of the county, away from commercial groves. As of December 2012, we have seen more finds, again in residential settings but much closer to commercial groves. These new finds have commercial groves within the 800-meter treatment zone requiring treatments. In one recent find, 17 different commercial operations were identified and required to treat. Locally, Ventura County citrus growers have been very proactive preparing for this threat. With the formation of the Ventura County ACP-HLB Task Force over two years ago, Ventura County growers readied themselves for ACP treatments. The Task Force organized growers, packers and PCAs to assure treatments were done timely and all growers complied. To that end, the Ventura Task Force was the first in the state to hire a treatment coordinator to assure timely and accurate treatments in commercial groves. Ventura County growers remain confident that with the ongoing efforts of the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee, Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner, Ventura Task Force and local PCAs, we will remain profitable for many years to come. – **Gus Gunderson, Director of Farming – Southern Ranches, Limoneira Company**