



Asian Gypsy Moth

January 2011

United States and Canadian authorities have intercepted live Asian gypsy moth (AGM) egg masses on a large number of commercial marine vessels (ships) in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Many of these events posed a risk for the spread of this pest and required the vessels to be ordered into international waters. In all cases, delays in cargo loading and in routine clearance were significant. This has resulted in the loss of revenue to the shipping line, as the vessels were unable to conduct cargo operations, missed cargo charters, and have experienced significant schedule delays. These incidents can be avoided by adherence to pre-departure certification and/or performance of vessel self-inspections involving the removal and destruction of all AGM egg masses and other life stages prior to port arrival in the United States and Canada. Please ensure that no egg masses remain on board the vessel on arrival in the U.S. and Canada. The consequences of inadequate preparation are very high.

AGM is a very serious forest pest that hitchhikes on the superstructure of ships and containers. This could directly lead to widespread pest infestations in U.S. and Canadian forests in a relatively short period of time. AGM populations are prevalent in some seaport areas in Far East Russia, Japan, Korea, and Northern China. It is imperative that the maritime industry collaborates with U.S and Canadian authorities on measures to remove the risk of AGM incursion.

The shipping industry has improved markedly with increased awareness of necessary quarantine compliance for AGM. This has been vital to maintaining shipping schedules. Both countries are committed to working with industry to support measures that will reduce AGM risk at origin. U.S. and Canadian officials seek increased collaboration with shipping lines, agents, and associations in order to try to minimize these events with support of port monitoring and vessel pre-inspection techniques.

Moth flight occurs especially during night operations for cargo loading and unloading. Bright lights attract the female gypsy moths to the vessels. The periods of risk for Asian gypsy moth flight and infestation range from June 1 to August 10 in southern Japan and July 1 to September 30 in northern Japan and Far East Russia. China and Korea have similar flight periods of risk that range from June until September.

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We expect shipping lines to perform intensive vessel self-inspections to look for, remove (scrape off), and properly destroy all egg masses and other life stages of AGM prior to entering U.S. and Canadian ports to avoid facing inspection delays, re-routing and other potential impacts associated with mitigating the risk on entry to North America.

The egg masses and other life stages can be found anywhere on the outside of a vessels superstructure and elsewhere if doors were open while a vessel sits in port. Locations include on: barrel containers used for trash or liquid, lines used to moor the vessel to the dock, lines laying on the deck, the vessel super structure, air intake vents, smoke stack, the tracks used for crane movement, outside of the hull, any container stored on the deck, and anywhere inside a wheel/tool house or room on the aft deck. Egg masses may also be seen throughout the vessel on the aft deck, starboard and port sides of the deck and housing, on the bow, and on the main deck and upper decks of the main super structure, cargo hold framing, and other vessel framing including safety rails. The outside of containers must also be inspected.

Please note that most AGM egg mass interceptions have been on dry bulk vessels. However, other ship types including, liquid and break-bulk carriers, containerships, car carriers, fishing vessels and cruise ships are also at risk and have been found with AGM egg masses. Vessels found infested by US or Canadian authorities are not authorized to load or unload cargo until they are free of AGM life stages (egg masses, live larvae, pupae, and live adults). Due to North American coordination to prevent entry of this pest, vessels are informed that they cannot redirect to other U.S, Canada, or Mexico ports, but can choose to proceed to other foreign locations.

USDA and CFIA officials are not, however, recommending avoidance of any specific foreign ports. We are strongly recommending that vessels calling at ports in Far East Russia, Japan, Korea, and Northern China (ports north of Shanghai) during designated AGM flight periods address the AGM risk by obtaining certification that the vessel is free of AGM life stages prior to departure from authorised parties in these countries and performing a comprehensive vessel self-inspection well in advance to entering U.S. and Canadian ports. Canada and the US are taking a phased-in approach to full enforcement of certification to allow China and Korea to put systems in place. Beginning 2012, strong enforcement action will be taken on vessels entering the US or Canada without certification. During the transition period of 2011, vessels without certification are subject to outlined in Canada's policy found at <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/protect/dir/d-95-03e.shtml> and the United States' policy at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/manuals/ports/downloads/mac_pdf/33examining_carriers_vessels.pdf and may have associated costs and delays, while vessels entering the US or Canada with certification will be able to enter the US or Canada and unload or load cargo without delay.

The following measures are recommended:

Asian gypsy moth interception season on commercial vessels at U.S. and Canadian ports concerns ships which have called on ports in CHINA; KOREA; JAPAN, & Far East RUSSIA ANYTIME during period of JUNE through SEPTEMBER.

ACTIONS:

1. Vessels that have obtained pre-departure certifications should forward to their agents a copy of the CERTIFICATION that the vessel is free of Asian Gypsy Moth life stages.

2. Vessels that were unable to obtain pre-departure certifications that the vessel is free of Asian Gypsy Moths should, five days prior to the vessel's arrival at its first US or Canadian port, perform their own comprehensive self-inspection according to the attached GYPSY MOTH INSPECTION POCKET GUIDE and confirm to the agents whether their vessel is free of any infestation.

3. At least two days prior to the vessel's arrival to please forward to agent a copy of the vessel's voyage memo in order agents may provide to the local agriculture inspectors an opportunity to review the vessel's history of ports and dates.

Please contact the officials listed below for further information or questions.

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