

FACTSHEET

Plant Protection & Quarantine

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

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Pine Shoot Beetle Alert

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) needs your help in preventing the spread of the pine shoot beetle. This insect breeds in dead and dying pine trees and poses a threat to Christmas tree farms and pine tree nurseries. The beetle is present in parts of Michigan, Ohio, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. Most of the beetles have been found at Christmas tree farms.

By properly disposing of your leftover Christmas trees, you can play an important role in taking the bite out of the pine shoot beetle.

Disposal Requirements

Proper disposal of all Christmas trees originating from a pine shoot beetle-infested area is required under USDA regulations.

Leftover (unsold) trees must be disposed of by burning, chipping, or fumigation promptly after December 25. Not disposing of trees properly can result in fines up to \$5,000 per count.

History

The first pine shoot beetle discovered in the United States was found on a Christmas tree farm near Cleveland in July 1992. The beetle—widespread in Europe and Asia—was probably introduced into this country by foreign ships carrying beetle-infested wood as dunnage.

The beetle prefers Scotch pine but will feed on most other conifers, including spruce, larch, and fir trees. The pest attacks new pine shoots, stunting the growth of the tree.

The Danger

The beetle is the leading pest of pine trees in Europe and is so widespread that it cannot be eradicated in those countries. If proper precautions are not taken, the pine shoot beetle could reach the same pest status here. Please help protect our Nation's pine forests and Christmas tree farms and nurseries by properly disposing of your leftover Christmas trees.

For more information about the pine shoot beetle or disposal methods, contact Bob Foster, Assistant Operations Officer, APHIS, Plant Protection and Quarantine, at (301) 436-8247 or write him at 6505 Belcrest Road, Room 643, Hyattsville, MD 20782.