



September 9, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Christin Kamm
402-471-6856

EMERALD ASH BORER DISCOVERED IN SAUNDERS COUNTY

LINCOLN—The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), confirmed a find of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Saunders County. The Nebraska Forest Service collected an EAB larva from a tree on private land near Ashland. EAB, an invasive beetle that attacks and kills ash trees, was first found in Nebraska in June 2016.

“While it’s unfortunate EAB was found in Saunders County, it is not unexpected considering we have confirmed infestations in the neighboring counties of Douglas, Sarpy and Cass,” said NDA Director Steve Wellman.

EAB is a small, metallic-green beetle that is about ½ inch long. The larvae of this wood-boring insect tunnel under the bark of ash trees, disrupting the flow of water and nutrients, ultimately causing the tree to die. EAB-infested ash trees will exhibit thinning or dying branches in the top of the tree, S-shaped larval galleries under bark, D-shaped exit holes and suckers (along the trunk and main branches).

In an effort to slow the spread of EAB, NDA enacted the Nebraska EAB Quarantine in June 2016. Currently eight counties are regulated under this quarantine, including Cass, Dodge, Douglas, Lancaster, Otoe, Sarpy, Saunders and Washington. NDA staff set and monitor traps across Nebraska looking for additional emerald ash borer infestations. Staff also check for EAB by inspecting trees, nursery stock and firewood, and confirming compliance with state and federal regulations. NDA will consider changes to the existing quarantine later this fall, after all traps have been taken down.

The quarantine order prohibits distribution of ash nursery stock from within or out of the quarantine area, and regulates the movement of hardwood firewood and mulch, ash timber products and green waste material out of quarantined areas. NDA staff, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, work with the public and impacted industries to ensure compliance of the quarantines.

“While we can’t completely eliminate EAB, quarantines and innovative ideas like using biocontrol agents, help slow the spread of this destructive insect,” said NDA Director Steve Wellman. “That gives homeowners and municipalities across the state additional time to consider their options and make decisions about the future of their ash trees.”

The Nebraska EAB Working Group, which includes NDA, USDA, Nebraska Game and Parks, and the Nebraska Forest Service, encourages the use of locally-sourced firewood. EAB can travel in firewood, so burning firewood in the same county where it is purchased or purchasing heat-treated firewood is recommended.

If you feel you have located an EAB infestation, please report it to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture at (402) 471-2351, the Nebraska Forest Service at (402) 472-2944, or your local USDA office at (402) 434-2345.

Additional information on EAB and the quarantine, can be found on NDA’s website at: nda.nebraska.gov/plant/entomology/eab/. Additional information on EAB and Nebraska-specific recommendations for homeowners and municipalities can be found on the Nebraska Forest Services’ website at eabne.info.

###