

Shot Hole Borer and Fusarium Dieback Update

By Tim Spann

Research Program Director

Unlike the previous two years, polyphagous and Kuroshio shot hole borer (P/KSHB) activity has been relatively quiet this fall. In 2014 and 2015 it was common for P/KSHB trap captures in September and October to rise to 40-50 beetles per trap per week, but we have not seen the same rise in trap captures around avocado groves this year. This is good news, but it does not mean we can completely let our guard down.

In Ventura County, where initial beetle detections first occurred just over a year ago, the spread has been much slower than we experienced in San Diego County. The center of the infested area remains focused near the western edge of Santa Paula; to date only a couple of specimens have been trapped north and east of the city. Although one beetle was captured near Ojai in late 2015, no additional specimens have been found in that part of the county.

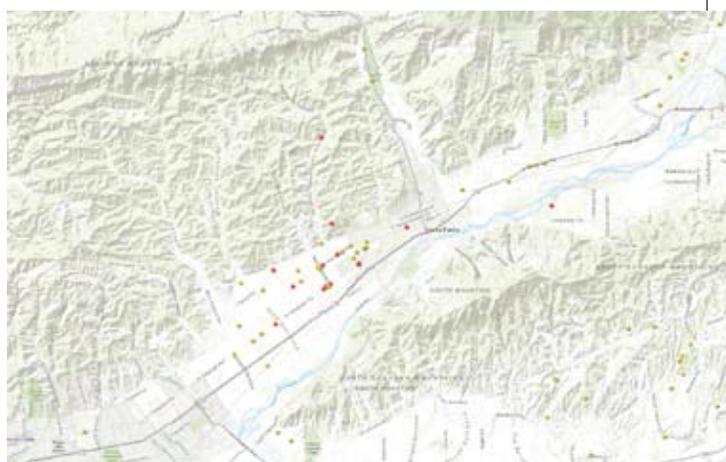
Although movement has been slower than expected this year, the KSHB has managed to make some large leaps. One KSHB has been trapped in both Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties in 2016. Even though there is no evidence, as of this writing, that there is an established population of the beetles in those counties, their capture is alarming since KSHB is only known to be in San Diego and southern Orange Counties. Thus, the appearance of KSHB in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties is likely from human movement (e.g., firewood or green waste).

Although these beetles are not causing the damage to avocados that we once thought they would, it is important to still take measures to control their spread as they are having devastating effects on the urban and natural forests.

We informed growers in the Fall 2016 issue of *From the Grove* that the monitoring program for SHBs was being suspended in San Diego and southern Riverside Counties. The California Avocado Commission (CAC) has a limited number of traps from that program that are available for growers in San Diego and Riverside Counties who may be interested in continuing monitoring in their own groves. The traps are available at no cost, but growers will need to service the traps and purchase lures themselves. If interested, please contact Tim Spann, CAC Research Program Director, for more details. 🥑



Shot Hole Borer distribution



Shot Hole Borer Santa Paula detail