

# Santa Cruz organics group drops its support for moth spraying

Light Brown Apple Moth

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By **BRIAN SEALS**  
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

SANTA CRUZ — The California organization responsible for certifying organic farmers shifted its stance on how to fight the light brown apple moth Monday, revoking its support for aerial spraying to mitigate the pest.

Cruz-based California Certified Organic Farmers said it instead backs “diversified ground pest management approaches,” such as using natural predators and biological insecticides to combat what the state says is a threat to California’s agriculture industry.

Meanwhile, protesters descended on the state Capitol on Monday to protest the state’s plan to expand aerial spraying

to eradicate the pest throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, while a group of cities has formed a coalition to combat the state’s plan for further aerial spraying.

In a statement, the organic board said it changed its position as it learned more about aspects of the spraying program.

“As we have learned more about the ecology, chemistry, policies and politics surrounding the eradication program

for the light brown apple moth, we question whether an eradication program can be successful, and we acknowledge that the repeated spraying of an untested material and its inert ingredients on a large populated area is not desirable,” the board stated. “We also believe that the health impacts on people, pets and

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