

County dives into moth dispute

Supervisors file suit to stop aerial spraying; state says action needed now

Light Brown Apple Moth

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Apple moth spraying

WHO'S PROPOSING IT: California Department of Agriculture.
WHERE: Scotts Valley, Santa Cruz, Capitola, Live Oak, Soquel, Aptos.
WHEN: 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. Nov. 4-9.
WHY: Control breeding of moth.
COST: \$2.7 million.
INFORMATION: www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/ea/downloads/lbam_ea_sc.pdf.

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SANTA CRUZ — Days before spraying for the light brown apple moth is scheduled to start in Santa Cruz County, the Board of Supervisors voted Monday to sue the state Department of Food and Agriculture in an attempt to stop it.

Supervisors declined to comment on the details of the lawsuit until it is officially filed, which they expect to happen Wednesday. But

Supervisor Jan Beautz, whose district includes Live Oak, where the highest concentration of moths has been found, said board members are especially concerned that the state has not conducted an environmental review of the possible effects of spraying the pesticide, Check-Mate LBAM-F.

"I've just gotten a lot of community opposition," Beautz said. "People are really too nervous about this."

The state is scheduled to start nighttime aerial spraying over parts of Santa Cruz County on

Sunday. The pesticide includes a pheromone that biologists say distracts males moths and stops them from mating with females.

The board's decision follows a similar move by the Santa Cruz City Council last week, when the council also voted to sue the state. Council members also cited the lack of environmental review, though the two jurisdictions are filing separate lawsuits.

A similar lawsuit has been filed in Monterey