

Moth

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nate information.

The draft EIR isn't expected to be completed until this summer, well after the state plans to resume aerial spraying of a pheromone in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties.

That treatment, along with those that occurred last fall, are based on emergency provisions of the state's environmental laws, Lyle said.

Some activists are skeptical of the environmental review process the department is undertaking, saying it already is using a method without knowing all the information.

"The idea [of an EIR] is to evaluate all the science so the decision is based on all the information," said David Dilworth of the group Helping Our Peninsula's Environment, who accuses the state of not caring about the science.

News of the meetings and the environmental report come a day after the state said it plans to resume aerial spraying in its bid to eradicate the light brown apple moth, a native of Australia.

It has yet to decide what type of treatment it will use in that spraying regimen. The department is considering replacing the products it used last fall, which were CheckMate OLR-F and CheckMate LBAM-F.

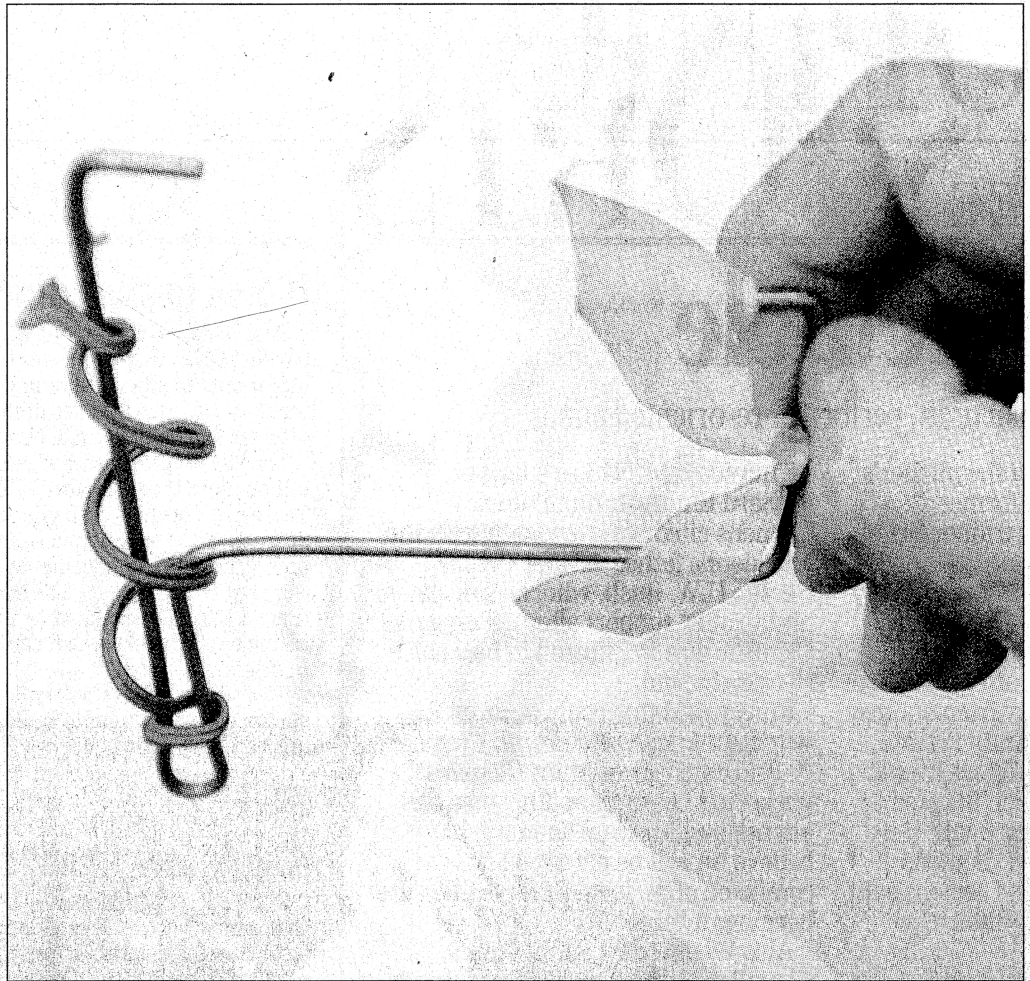
Testing in New Zealand is exploring products that would last longer than 30 days.

This round could be supplemented with unleashing a breed of stingerless wasp, which target the apple moth's eggs.

Aerial spraying also is planned in August for San Francisco and areas of Contra Costa, Alameda, San Mateo and Marin counties.

The spray releases a pheromone that works by confusing the moth's mating cycle. It doesn't actually kill the moth.

Another treatment under consideration for Santa Cruz County uses pheromone-infused twist ties applied to utility poles and street trees; another involves



Jeff Vendsel/MediaNews

A twist-tie treatment, which creates mating disruptions by dispensing moth pheromone, would be hung from trees and is one of the eradication efforts proposed for Light Brown Apple Moth.

hand-spraying of plants and trees with a substance called *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt.

Dilworth said his group wants the department to evaluate a method that would use sticky traps, similar to the ones used to monitor the presence of the moths. He said those would be more effective and accountable and actually kill the moths.

More than 600 people reported adverse health effects after the spraying in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties last fall, with CDFA logging 330 reports and more than 300 additional complaints reported by environmental groups in the Monterey and Santa Cruz areas.

Contact Brian Seals at 706-3264 or bseals@santacruzsentinel.com.

Light brown apple moth meetings

SANTA CRUZ

WHERE: University Inn & Conference Center, Sierra & Dawn Room, 611 Ocean St., Santa Cruz.

WHEN: 6-8 p.m. Thursday.

MONTEREY

WHERE: Monterey Peninsula College, Lecture Forum 103, 980 Fremont St., Monterey.

WHEN: 6-8 p.m. Wednesday.

COMMENTS: The deadline for written comments is March 20. They may be sent to Jim Rains, staff environmental scientist, California Department of Food and Agriculture Plant Health and Pest Prevention Services, 1220 N St., Room A-316, Sacramento, CA 95814.

ABOUT THE EIR: It will evaluate the effects of eradication strategies and methods for the light brown apple moth in portions of the state where infestations have been identified. Environmental issues raised during the meetings will be incorporated into a public scoping report and made available to the public and preparers of the EIR.

INFORMATION: Including an action plan for light brown apple moth eradication, can be found at www.cdfa.ca.gov/phpps/PDEP/lbam/lbam_main.html.