

"The primary way to eradicate this pest remains aerial spraying," Lyle said. "The expectation is that the program will move forward with that in mind in 2008."

He said aerial pheromone treatments are scheduled to begin in late spring or early summer.

That doesn't sit well with groups opposed to the aerial spraying that occurred in the region last fall. Those groups say the state didn't thoroughly meet state law for reviewing the program under its environmental laws and that alternatives to spraying have been given short shrift.

"It shows their absolute hostility to anything but what they have already decided," said David Dilworth of Helping Our Peninsula's Environment in Carmel. "They refuse to look at alternatives."

Agriculture officials say fighting the pest is crucial to protecting the state's agricultural industry.

Nearly 10,400 light brown apple moths have been trapped in Santa Cruz County, where the agriculture industry was worth \$414 million in 2006. Less than 1,000 have been found in Monterey County, where spraying started first.

Aerial spraying last fall of a pheromone to combat the pest stirred widespread opposition