

Lyle confirmed that Watsonville, for the first time, will be included in the spring applications, beginning June 1.

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Wasps included in treatment strategy

In some of the areas designated for aerial treatment, the plan also calls for the release of tiny, stingerless wasps — called trichogramma — that target the LBAM eggs, CDFA reported.

"The native California wasps are 1/25th of an inch long, harmless to people and pets and they are widely used by home gardeners and organic or IPM (integrated pest management) growers," CDFA reported. "The wasps would be released in spring 2008 and would be used in conjunction with aerial treatments — most likely in San Francisco, Santa Cruz County and on the Monterey Peninsula. These wasps will not bother over-wintering monarch butterflies and they would not be released near threatened or endangered plants or butterflies and moths.

"Smaller, more isolated infested areas would be treated using either pheromone-infused twist ties or a pheromone-based male moth attractant treatment applied to utility poles and street trees on public and private property. In each area, the infestation's size and density, the availability of host plants, and other variables will be considered in determining the appropriate method," CDFA reported.

U.S. Department of Food and Agriculture continues field testing new aerial pheromone products in New Zealand, with the goal of finding a pheromone that lasts longer in the environ-

ment than 30 days, which would require fewer aerial treatments, Lyle said.

"That research project is still in process, still under way," Lyle said. "We're hoping that there will be a pheromone product that emerges from those trials that can allow us to treat less frequently."

In April, the state may have an indication of which pheromone would be most effective, he said.