RESOLUTION NO. 08-4

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALBANY CITY COUNCIL OPPOSING THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE AERIAL SPRAY PROGRAM TO ERADICATE THE LIGHT BROWN APPLE MOTHS

WHEREAS, the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) is a pest subject to Federal and State quarantine and eradication orders; and

WHEREAS, there is a confirmed presence of Light Brown Apple Moths in Alameda County; and

WHEREAS, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) plans to begin an LBAM aerial spraying program in Alameda County and surrounding areas in spring of 2008; and

WHEREAS, modern Integrated Pest Management (IPM) relies on least-toxic, environmentally sensitive control methods; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albany Park and Recreation Master Plan commits the city to “a pest management policy that favors the use of organic or natural methods” and “a thorough and public process” to “consider the careful and limited use of chemicals of the least toxic nature”; and

WHEREAS, least-toxic control options are available for LBAM, including physical and cultural practices such as clean-up of plant debris where moth larvae over winter; use of natural predators, parasites, and insect diseases; introduction of sterile male moths; and use of pheromone sticky traps; and

WHEREAS, aerial and other blanket pesticide applications have repeatedly been shown in the past to upset natural ecosystem balance in unpredictable and often catastrophic ways; and
WHEREAS, aerial and other blanket pesticide applications have repeatedly been shown in the past to cause unintended, unpredictable, and often serious human health effects; and

WHEREAS, the State has claimed an emergency exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in order to begin the LBAM aerial spraying program without conducting environmental review based on an emergency exemption; and

WHEREAS, the State has confirmed that it will begin preparation of an Environmental Impact Report after the aerial spraying program has begun; and

WHEREAS, blanket spraying of chemicals is expensive and inefficient; and

WHEREAS, biologists have testified that aerial pesticide spraying is extremely unlikely to eradicate LBAM; and

WHEREAS, biologists have testified that the range over which LBAM has been detected in California indicates that LBAM has been established in the state for some time; and

WHEREAS, CDFA has stated that no physical crop damage has been attributed to LBAM; and

WHEREAS, the risk of economic damage alone does not justify the health and environmental risks of aerial pesticide applications; and

WHEREAS, the State has relied almost entirely on its own scientists to address public concerns about the LBAM spray program and has not employed independent outside experts to evaluate and support the program or and address issues in a direct and impartial manner; and

WHEREAS, the CDFA LBAM spraying program has used pesticides that an independent toxicologist’s review has stated have not been tested for long-term human toxicity; and

WHEREAS, the CDFA LBAM spraying program is relying on pesticides that contain ingredients that are highly toxic to aquatic life; and
WHEREAS, the CDFA LBAM program sprays pesticides in microscopic plastic
capsules that pose unknown inhalation risks; and

WHEREAS, the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains that
the pheromone pesticide poses only “minimal risk to human health,” but acknowledges
that it is considered a “slight to moderate dermal irritant” and does present some very low
toxicity” [see Treatment Program for Light Brown Apple Moth in Santa Cruz and
Northern Monterey Counties, California (September 2007) pages 10-121; and

WHEREAS, the USDA states that its risk assessment assumes that the rate of
exposure will be insignificant, with no dietary exposure from food and just a minimal
amount of incidental exposure from drinking water or swimming [see Treatment
Program for Light Brown Apple Moth in Santa Cruz and Northern Monterey Counties,
California (September 2007) pages 10-121; and

WHEREAS, aerial spraying disproportionately affects vulnerable populations
such as those who work and play outdoors, those with the recognized disability multiple
chemical sensitivity, and those in the homeless population who have no option for
protection from the spray or receipt of written notification of spray dates; and

WHEREAS, LBAM aerial spraying in the Santa Cruz and Monterey areas
resulted in the spraying of numerous residents and pets; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of reports of health effects were reported following the
LBAM aerial spraying in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties; and

WHEREAS, other environmental impacts were reported following the LBAM
aerial spraying in the Monterey and Santa Cruz areas; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED that the Albany
City Council:

1) Opposes the CDFA aerial spray program to eradicate LBAM.

2) Requests that CDFA protect the health and welfare of the residents and natural
environment of Alameda County by immediately shifting its LBAM control methods to
least-toxic Integrated Pest Management methods such as those listed above.
3) Requests that CDFA shift its focus to educating the USDA regarding the lack of crop damage done by LBAM, the need to use least-toxic control methods that do not expose populated areas to aerial spraying, and the need to appropriately downgrade the pest classification of LBAM to reflect the lack of risk it poses.

4) Requests that the State conduct a long-term study of the health and environmental effects resulting from the aerial spraying project that has been conducted to date in Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, taking into account reports collected by citizens in the absence of an easily accessible method of reporting to the State.

5) Supports the introduction and passage of state legislation requiring explicit consent of affected residents before any aerial spraying program can be implemented.

References


Harder, Daniel, PhD. 2007. Testimony Submitted in County of Santa Cruz v. CDFA, Superior Court of California, Santa Cruz County. October 31.


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PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALBANY,
this 22nd day of January 2008, by the following votes:

AYES: Council Members Atkinson, Javandel, Okawachi, Wiley & Mayor Lieber

NOES: None

ABSENT: None


JACQUELINE L. BUCHOLZ, CMC
CITY CLERK

The City of Albany is dedicated to maintaining its small town ambience, responding to the needs of the community, and providing a safe, healthy environment now and in the future.