



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture



BRITISH
COLUMBIA



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US and Canadian entomologists make plans for 2021 Asian giant hornet season

OLYMPIA – The Asian giant hornet, an invasive pest that threatens pollinators and ignores international borders, is the focus of an international effort to eradicate it in the Pacific Northwest. That's why, in the coming year, Washington state, British Columbia, and U.S. federal agencies are gearing up and collaborating on their plans to track, trap and eradicate any Asian giant hornets they find.

Washington's plans remain similar to last year's response, including a strong emphasis on public outreach, reporting, and trapping in addition to the agency's trapping. The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) will continue to use orange juice and rice cooking wine in traps while citizen scientists will have the option of using either the orange juice or a brown sugar-based bait. WSDA's trapping will remain focused on areas in Whatcom County where Asian giant hornets were detected in 2019 and 2020. Residents in Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island, Jefferson, and Clallam counties are especially encouraged to participate in citizen scientist trapping beginning in July.

In British Columbia, the 2021 Asian giant hornet surveillance program will include traps in areas where there were previous findings as well as continued outreach and networking with B.C. beekeepers, local governments and partner agencies in those areas. The work will continue last year's efforts with comprehensive surveys in Nanaimo and the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island, and in the Fraser Valley, from White Rock to Aldergrove. Six hornet specimens were collected in the Fraser Valley through public reporting. No sightings or collection of Asian giant hornets were reported on Vancouver Island in 2020, which could be declared Asian giant hornet-free if no specimens are reported this year.

In addition to detection and eradication programs, several agencies, including Washington State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) are conducting research to support detection and eradication efforts.

Reports from the public have been critical for locating Asian giant hornets. Last year, half of the confirmed reports in Washington and all of the confirmed reports in British Columbia were from members of the public. Washington residents are asked to continue to report all sightings of Asian giant hornet to WSDA at agr.wa.gov/hornets, via email at hornets@agr.wa.gov, or by calling 1-800-443-6684. British Columbians who think they may have seen an Asian giant hornet can report their findings to the Invasive Species Council of BC at 1-888-933-3722, online at bcinvasives.ca/report, or via the council's "Report Invasives" mobile phone app.

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Media advisory – Virtual Press Conference

What: The Washington State Department of Agriculture, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are holding a joint virtual press conference regarding the Asian giant hornet. Agencies will provide information on their planned 2021 Asian giant hornet activities and/or be available for questions from the media.

Who: *Speakers:*

- Sven Spichiger, Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Paul van Westendorp, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- Anne LeBrun, National Policy Manager for Honey Bee and Pollinator Pest Programs, in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- Anna Childers, U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service Bee Research Laboratory

Available for questions:

- Gail Wallin, Invasive Species Council of British Columbia
- Timothy Lawrence, Washington State University Extension
- Chris Looney, Washington State Department of Agriculture

Statement:

A written statement from the US Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the “Murder Hornet Eradication Pilot Program” included in the December 2020 COVID stimulus package is below.

When: March 17, 2021 at 1 p.m. Pacific

Meeting info: **Members of the public** can watch the live TVW broadcast of the press conference on [TVW’s website](#). We will also post the press conference afterward for public viewing on our [YouTube](#) page.

Members of the press Participation in the press conference is only open to members of the press. Pre-registration is required to attend. Unfortunately, registration is only available via a desktop computer; you cannot register on a mobile device.

PLEASE REGISTER AT LEAST ONE HOUR IN ADVANCE TO ENSURE YOUR REGISTRATION IS APPROVED PRIOR TO THE START OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

[Register to attend the virtual press conference](#)

Need Asian giant hornet photos or videos? You can [download images and videos from WSDA's website](#). Please credit the Washington State Department of Agriculture unless otherwise indicated in the file name.

USFWS Statement: "The USFWS is aware of the Omnibus language. The USFWS supports efforts to eradicate the AGH but is unable to implement the authorized grant program in 2021 without dedicated appropriations. USFWS has a strong track record of partnering with the States, USDA and Tribes to address on-going invasive species concerns including AGH, and we foresee those collaborative efforts continuing into the future."