



Georgia Department of Agriculture
Tommy Irvin, Commissioner
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Serious threat to forests, city trees, gardens

Georgia Agriculture Dept. Quarantines All Nursery Plants from California

ATLANTA – The Georgia Department of Agriculture has issued a quarantine against all nursery plants from California due to a serious fungal disease found in at least one nursery that ships plants into Georgia and due to the possibility of the disease in other California nurseries that may ship into the state.

Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture Tommy Irvin issued the quarantine today following notification that the Sudden Oak Death fungus (*Phytophthora ramorum*) had been discovered on camellias at Monrovia Nursery, Azusa, California, a major supplier of many kinds of plants to garden centers across the country. The disease has also been discovered in Specialty Plants, Inc., San Marcos, California. Department of Agriculture personnel are working to determine if that nursery shipped any plants to Georgia.

“There are 11 other California nurseries where high risk samples have been taken,” Commissioner Irvin said. “The California Department of Food and Agriculture has said they are 90 percent sure the samples are positive for the disease, but they will not quarantine the nurseries and have said they will not release the names of the nurseries until the samples are confirmed positive – probably sometime next week. We are closing the borders to all California nurseries today until they release the names of the 11 nurseries,” said Commissioner Irvin.

“Sudden Oak Death is an extremely serious disease. It not only affects oaks but other plants as well including azaleas, rhododendrons, maples, beeches and buckeyes. This has the potential to be more devastating than Chestnut Blight, which wiped out virtually all stands of the native American chestnut in the 1930s. The cost to lumber companies, homeowners, gardeners, and cities would be overwhelming and the damage to wildlife and our landscape would be heartbreaking,” said Irvin.

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