PENNSYLVANIA'S CHRISTMAS TREE SCOUTING REPORT
MAY 2, 2012

Weekly newsletter compiled by Sarah Pickel, PA Department of Agriculture.

This week's scouting data contributors:
Jim Fogarty (Halabura Tree Farm), Karen Najda (PDA), Susan Newhart (Acadia Tree Farm), Sarah Pickel, Brian Schildt (PDA), Cathy Thomas (PDA)

GDD TOTALS AS OF TUESDAY, 5/1/12:

LOCATION	GDD TOTAL
Elizabethtown, Lancaster County	289.5
Hallstead, Susquehanna County	166
New Cumberland, York County	327.5
New Ringgold, Schuylkill County	260.5

BUD BREAK

New growth continues to push out on trees across the mid-state. The true firs, which are typically the last to break, are breaking in southern counties (Canaan, Concolor and Fraser in Lancaster and York) and even are beginning to break in some northern counties (Canaan fir in Susquehanna).

SPRUCE NEEDLE RUST

In New Ringgold, Schuylkill County, spruce needle rust is still sporulating, however, in some areas, the buds of Colorado blue spruce are still closed on some trees. Spray recommendations say to begin fungicide treatments when trees break bud and to repeat at weekly intervals while needles are still tender or until sporulating needles are cast from the tree. For more disease information, visit: http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/spruce-needle-rust.pdf/view.

PINE NEEDLE SCALE

This week, burgundy/rusty colored crawlers of Pine needle scale have just started to emerge from under the white, oblong female scales on Eastern white pine in New Cumberland, York County. In Elizabethtown, Lancaster County, the crawlers have not yet emerged, but underneath the scale covers,

Figure 1: Female pine needle scale with crawlers [PDA]

50% of the eggs have hatched and crawlers will be ready to emerge soon. This armored scale pest can be found on white, Scotch, Austrian and other pines. Infestations tend to be more severe on the hard needle pines. The crawlers, or nymphs, hatch from the overwintering eggs and emerge from the female scales to spread out to new needles. There are two generations of this pest, so the crawlers which emerge in May will develop a white covering, will mature and will produce eggs as summer progresses. The next generation typically emerges in July. To control this pest, an insecticide should be applied before the crawlers develop their white protective coverings. A second insecticide application may be necessary one week later, and in heavy cases, a third a week after that. For more information on pine needle scale, visit: http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/pine-needle-scale.pdf/view.

LOOKING AHEAD

In New Cumberland, York County, a few **bagworm** larvae have begun to hatch inside of last year's bags. This

NEWLY HATCHED LARVAE

could mean that some growers will see larvae beginning to emerge from the bags this week. These caterpillars feed on the new needles of many species of conifer and can cause considerable damage in just one season. As the caterpillars mature and continue to feed throughout the season, they form protective bags around their bodies made of needle debris. The bags somewhat resemble pine cones. To control this pest, growers should make an insecticide application when they see larvae feeding on the needles. The bagworms are most susceptible to insecticides when they are small. To see how close bagworms are to emerging on a particular farm, growers can cut open one of last season's bags and look for signs of movement (larvae are black and gray) inside the interior casing. Look for more information on this pest in next week's report. Additional information can also be found at:
http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/bagworm.pdf/view.

For your reference, the *2011 Insecticides and Miticides for Christmas Tree Pests* can be found at the Penn State Christmas tree Website, http://ento.psu.edu/extension/christmas-trees.

The next scouting report will be available on Wednesday, May 9, 2012.