

**REPORT OF THE
DIVISION OF PRODUCT AND
INDUSTRY REGULATION
OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND CONSUMER SERVICES**

**Implementing Recommendations
of House Document 2A, 1990
(Increasing Public Knowledge
of the Gypsy Moth)**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 8

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
1992**

**REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS
OF HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 2A
Increasing Public Knowledge of The Gypsy Moth**

Item 130-B in the 1990-92 Appropriations Act directed the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to report on the recommendations contained in House Document No. 2A, *Increasing the Public Knowledge of the Gypsy Moth*. House Document No. 2A and attending recommendations were divided into two phases, A and B. Progress on implementing these recommendations in 1991 are contained in this report.

Phase II-A

There were two recommendations under this section of the report:

1. *The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services should continue to monitor current research in methods development for predicting gypsy moth population trends.*
2. *The Commonwealth should continue to use established egg mass survey methods to plan and develop gypsy moth suppression projects.*

Progress on Implementing Recommendations:

- a. Personnel responsible for the gypsy moth suppression program in the Office of Plant Protection within the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are continually monitoring and reviewing research relating to predictive models and as such remain active participants in local and national gypsy moth reviews where such research is discussed. Since the initial gypsy moth infestation into Virginia is ongoing, it is expected that this outbreak will continue for a longer period of time than the normal 5-7 years. Once the gypsy moth has spread throughout Virginia, future outbreaks will likely follow patterns similar to those experienced in the Northeastern states. Current prediction models show the entire Commonwealth of Virginia, as well as the entire states of Tennessee and North Carolina will experience gypsy moth problems to some degree by the year 2015. Federal programs enacted to reduce the spread will have some impact on this prediction. One example is the Appalachian Integrated Pest Management Project, which currently includes 18 counties in Virginia. Another is a possible federal project to help slow the spread which may include some counties located in the southwestern portion of Virginia, North Carolina and West Virginia. Finally the gypsy moth spread could be further reduced if research produces an environmentally safe, effective control mechanism.
- b. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection personnel used established egg mass survey methods to plan for the 1991 suppression program. The same methods will be employed in planning for the 1992 suppression program. Another method of conducting egg mass surveys is currently being utilized by the Appalachian Integrated Pest Management Project in Virginia. This method is known as sequential sampling. It has been adopted primarily for use in low or nonexistent human populated areas, and therefore has not been adopted under the Cooperative Suppression Program, since the majority of the areas treated under this program are in forested residential communities.

Phase II-B

There were seven recommendations under this section of the report:

Recommendation No. 1:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI & SU) Cooperative Extension Service should conduct training of all Cooperative Extension personnel on the gypsy moth including life cycle, damage and its impact, control strategies and government control programs.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 1:

- a. Extension personnel continue to be trained in all facets of the gypsy moth. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University as well as the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection work closely with local extension personnel in keeping them informed of their local gypsy moth problems including identified populations, if any, as well as assisting them in preparing their strategy to combat the problem once it surfaces.
- b. Since additional funding has not been appropriated to VPI & SU to initiate more extensive training, existing resources have been utilized to conduct additional educational opportunities. One resource which has been utilized is a Virginia Gypsy Moth Review. This two-day Review, which is held in a conference style format, is similar in structure to the National Gypsy Moth Review, but focuses on those gypsy moth problems specific to Virginia. Attendees include extension personnel, gypsy moth coordinators, gypsy moth researchers, educators and industry contacts. This review was held for the first time in 1990, with over 125 people in attendance. It will be held again in January of 1992. Topics are varied and include speakers from the research, environmental and governmental aspects related to the gypsy moth.

Recommendation No. 2:

VPI & SU Cooperative Extension Service should advertise the availability of gypsy moth educational materials to local governments at no charge to them.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 2:

- a. Educational materials are currently being sent to extension personnel in localities impacted by the gypsy moth as well as those interested in educating their local public as to the general nature of the gypsy moth. This material is being supplied cooperatively by the local gypsy moth coordinator office, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection and the U. S. Forest Service. VPI & SU has been unable to make new literature available due to staff and funding reductions. This situation is expected to continue into the near future.
- b. Although increasing the availability of gypsy moth educational materials will be difficult given the current budgetary constraints, every effort has been and will continue to be made to make these resources available to all those that express a desire or exhibit a need for them.

Recommendation No. 3:

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services should hold a meeting of all local government officials once each year in localities where needed, to explain the gypsy moth and its impact.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 3

- a. Meetings were held in 1990 and 1991 with local gypsy moth coordinators to discuss all facets of the gypsy moth, including the expected impact on specific areas. This was done by Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection staff on a one to one basis with the local coordinator, and through group meetings. In addition, all those affiliated with gypsy moth, including local governing boards are invited to attend the Annual Virginia Gypsy Moth Review, which includes general discussion about the gypsy moth, its expected spread and impact in Virginia. In addition, Office of Plant Protection personnel meet with local gypsy moth committees as necessary to provide information pertaining to the insect and the Cooperative Suppression Program. Scoping meetings and open houses are held each fall with public meetings scheduled in the spring in those localities conducting aerial applications. Both are attended by local officials as well as constituents.
- b. Local gypsy moth coordinators in Virginia have officially formed an association known as the Association of Virginia Gypsy Moth Managers. Their purpose statement reads as follows: "Recognizing the impact of gypsy moth on the people and natural resources of Virginia, we, local government representatives of gypsy moth programs, resolve to gather and exchange information expertise, ideas and, when appropriate, resources, in a mutual effort to manage this introduced pest." This group, as the purpose statement expresses, was established to assist in handling the gypsy moth problem in Virginia on a local level. This includes assisting localities who have not yet experienced high level gypsy moth infestations but need to be prepared to handle the problem once it exists, as well as sharing information among themselves in those areas which deal with gypsy moth problems on a yearly basis. The Association works very closely with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection as well the VPI & SU Cooperative Extension Service. It has been a tremendous help in pulling together separate human resources to accomplish the common goal of education and awareness of the gypsy moth problem.
- c. The Office of Plant Protection personnel will continue to meet with local gypsy moth coordinators in areas impacted by the gypsy moth.

Recommendation No. 4:

Localities, in cooperation with VPI & SU Cooperative Extension Service, through cost sharing should develop several mobile displays explaining the gypsy moth and control strategies. The display could then be made available for use at county fairs, schools, and other public functions.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 4:

- a. Due to the current budget situation, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has been unable to prepare educational displays on the gypsy moth. The Department does utilize a display prepared by the Office of Plant Protection for use at local fairs. In addition, several local gypsy moth programs have displays available which are utilized to educate the local public.

- b. Due to the current budget constraints, it is unlikely that the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services will be able to provide the displays. The Cooperative Suppression Program continues to operate, as it did in 1990, with \$179,000 budgeted for cost-share for gypsy moth control measures. This includes cost-sharing with localities for the purchase of biological controls and monitoring items. Although the Department is currently not able to provide displays, hard copy information is available to be used as part of gypsy moth displays on the local level as requested.

Recommendation No. 5:

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and VPI & SU should jointly develop a video tape on the gypsy moth and Virginia's Cooperative Suppression Program for use by schools, local government personnel and Cooperative Extension personnel.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 5:

- a. Additional funds will need to be appropriated for this recommendation to be implemented. Given the current budget situation, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has not requested additional funding to implement this recommendation.
- b. The U. S. Forest Service is preparing to release an educational video concerning the gypsy moth and available control tactics which will fulfill the need as expressed in recommendation No. 5. This video which will be available to all local gypsy moth programs, was filmed primarily in Virginia, and will be utilized to educate the general public about the gypsy moth. Release of this video is expected by January 1, 1992. In addition, the Virginia Department of Forestry is preparing a gypsy moth video concerning general gypsy moth information that should be available in the spring of 1992. This video will also be available to local gypsy moth programs, and the Department of Forestry Regional Foresters for use during presentations.

Recommendation No. 6:

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Communication Office should work with the television media including cable, education and public service, to develop a series on the gypsy moth.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 6:

- a. This recommendation has not been acted on, due to the current budget situation.

Recommendation No. 7:

VPI & SU Cooperative Extension Service should work with the Department of Education to specifically include the study of the gypsy moth in their Standards of Learning.

Progress on Implementing Recommendation No. 7:

- a. This is a complicated process that involves negotiations between the Department of Education and the Extension Service. Since a budget addendum in 1989 for new educational initiatives was not approved, implementation of this recommendation will probably not be possible for several years. Local extension personnel, as well as local gypsy moth coordinators and Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Plant Protection personnel do make themselves available to local schools systems to educate the children about gypsy moth. In addition "Gypsy Moth in the Classroom", a teacher's guide and workbook, has been distributed to several local school systems for use at their discretion.