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For Immediate Release

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EMERALD ASH BORER CONFIRMED IN LINCOLN AND NEMAHA COUNTIES

LINCOLN—The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), recently confirmed the presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Lincoln (North Platte) and Nemaha (Shubert area) counties. This is the first confirmation of EAB in both counties.

EAB, an invasive beetle that attacks and kills ash trees, was first discovered in Nebraska in 2016. Since that time, EAB has been confirmed in Cass, Buffalo, Dodge, Platte, Douglas, Hall, Lancaster, Sarpy, Seward, and Washington counties. In December 2021, the USDA officially deregulated EAB and lifted federal quarantine regulations. Nebraska no longer has quarantine restrictions for EAB, but NDA inspectors continue to check nursery stock for diseases and insects, including EAB.

“The emerald ash borer is a destructive pest that, unfortunately, continues to make its way across Nebraska,” said NDA Director Sherry Vinton. “Nebraskans continue to try to slow the spread of EAB, which helps. But it is difficult to completely stop EAB from moving into other parts of the state. Monitoring for the pest gives people more time to prepare for its arrival in their community and develop plans for managing EAB and disposing of infested ash trees.”

EAB is a small, metallic-green beetle that is about ½ inch long. The larvae of this wood-boring insect tunnel under the bark of ash trees, disrupting the flow of water and nutrients, ultimately causing the tree to die. EAB-infested ash trees will exhibit thinning or dying branches in the top of the tree, S-shaped larval galleries under bark, D-shaped exit holes and suckers (along the trunk and main branches).

NDA State Entomologist Natalia Bjorklund offers the following suggestions to help prevent the human-assisted spread of the insect:

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- Use locally-sourced firewood, burning it in the same county where you purchased it, as EAB can easily be moved in firewood.
- Consider treating healthy, high-value ash trees located within a 15-mile radius of a known infestation. Treatment will need to be continually reapplied and will only prolong the tree's life, not save it. Trees that are experiencing declining health should be considered for removal.

If you are in a non-infested county and think you have located an EAB infestation, please report it to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture at 402-471-2351, the Nebraska Forest Service at 402-472-2944, or your local USDA office at 402-434-2345.

Nebraskans are encouraged to contact a certified arborist to assist with EAB treatment and tree removal. Find local certified arborists through the Nebraska Arborists Association at <https://www.nearborists.org/find-an-arborist-1>.

Additional information on EAB can be found on NDA's website at: <https://nda.nebraska.gov/plant/entomology/eab/index.html>. Nebraska-specific recommendations for homeowners and municipalities can be found on the Nebraska Forest Services' website at <https://nfs.unl.edu/nebraska-eab>.

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MEDIA: Because EAB has been officially deregulated by USDA, NDA will share new cases on our website in the future, and not via press release.