

Defining 25+ Properties and Commercial Citrus Production Properties
DRAFT – As of July 22, 2021

- The Food and Agriculture Code (FAC) 8405 defines citrus acreage as a parcel, tract or lot of land with 25 or more citrus trees of any age growing on it, except a parcel, tract or lot which is used as a nursery. This code section is specific to Citrus Pest Control Districts and their ability to assess fees on properties.
- While properties with more than 25 citrus trees are considered “citrus acreage” by the California Food and Agriculture Code, this does not mean that these properties are commercial production operations as defined by the CPDPD. Oftentimes, 25+ tree properties are residential hobbyists, common areas within residential communities or business/industrial parks.
- In its ACP/HLB Action Plan, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division defines a commercial citrus production operation as a property that has contiguous citrus with edges defined as spacing between plantings larger than a wind machine row, one acre or more of trees (100 trees per acre) and being grown with the intent of harvesting the fruit for sale.
- The CPDPD uses the threshold of 25 or more trees as a way to determine treatment protocols. Properties with less than 25 trees receive treatments conducted by Division staff and paid for by the Division. Properties above the 25-tree threshold will require treatment by the landowner at their expense.
- There have been five HLB-positive plant samples detected on residential or industrial properties with more than 25 citrus trees. While these properties are not commercial production orchards per the definition above, because the number of citrus trees on the property exceeds 25, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division will require the property owner to conduct treatment and tree removal activities on their property at their own expense.

Reactive Q & A:

Have there been any detections of HLB in a commercial citrus area?

No. While there have been five HLB-positive plant samples detected on properties with 25+ citrus trees in the existing HLB quarantine area, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division does not recognize any of these five properties as commercial production orchards. There has been one ACP sample collected in a commercial grove in Riverside County that tested positive for the bacteria that causes HLB, but no plant samples on the property have tested positive for HLB.

When and where did these detections occur?

In the last four years, five properties with 25 or more citrus trees have experienced an HLB-positive detection. The first was in Garden Grove in Orange County in 2018. In 2019, there was a detection in the city of Orange in Orange County. In 2020, there were HLB detections on properties with more than 25 trees in the City of Riverside and Colton, and in 2021, there was another detection in Colton.

If they aren't commercial production orchards, what type of properties are they?

The majority were residential properties where citrus was being grown for personal use and consumption. One property was an industrial park that had more than 50 trees for decorative purposes.

If these properties are not considered commercial production orchards, why do they have compliance agreements with the state that authorize fruit selling or movement of bulk citrus?

Out of an abundance of caution properties with over 25 trees may be placed under a compliance agreement to educate the property owner about the rules and regulations regarding ACP and HLB quarantines.