



UPPER GRAND VALLEY PEST CONTROL DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2007 - Palisade, Colorado. The Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) is a highly destructive plant pest that can be very difficult and expensive to control once it becomes established. Japanese beetle adults attack the foliage, flowers, or fruits of more than 300 different ornamental and agricultural plants. Adult beetles not only damage numerous ornamental herbaceous plants, shrubs, vines and trees, but also small fruits, tree fruits, row crops, and many other plants. Specifically, adults can gouge peach fruit and devour grape leaves. Beetle larvae (grubs) feed on plant roots, attacking mainly turf (lawns, golf courses, and pastures) but also damage the roots of many other crop and ornamental plants.

The beetle's life cycle takes one year to complete in most areas within the United States. The pest spends ten months underground as grub-like larvae. The adults emerge in June, July and August, and the female lays eggs up to six inches deep in the soil to start the cycle over again. It was determined that there was an established population of this pest in Palisade in 2003. Eradication efforts began in 2004 and are continuing.

The Japanese Beetle Advisory Committee has directed the Eradication Program in Palisade since 2004. The Committee consists of fruit growers, citizens, the Town of Palisade, the Upper Grand Valley Pest Control District, Mesa County, CSU TriRiver Area Cooperative Extension, and the Colorado Department of Agriculture. The Program has been very successful to date, with trap numbers declining from 1232 in 2004 to 66 in 2006.

The Palisade Town Board recently adopted a resolution recognizing the threat of this pest to the fruit and vineyard industries in the area, supporting the continued eradication program and encouraging all citizens to participate.

The citizens of Palisade have played an essential role in the success of this program, allowing their lawns to be treated and traps to be placed on their properties. To assure the continued success of the Program, the Committee invites all citizens to attend a Open House to learn more about this devastating pest, what the Program has accomplished and how they can get involved in the program.

An Open House will be held at the Palisade Veterans Memorial Community Center at Palisade Park on April 25, 2007 at 6 pm. All interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

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