



Quarterly Report

January – March 2019

Completed reports are published online at www.DATOC.us.

New Expertise

In the first month of the quarter, DATOC welcomed 4 new members: Dr. Mamoudou Sétamou, Dr. Tania Brenes-Arguedas, Dr. Monique Rivera, and Dr. Bruce Babcock.

Dr. Sétamou is based out of Texas, and is a citrus entomologist and IPM specialist. Dr. Brenes-Arguedas, in Davis, CA, is an applied biostatistician and data modeler. Dr. Rivera is an Assistant Specialist in Cooperative Extension, and Dr. Babcock is an economist who specializes in agricultural issues. Rivera and Babcock are both based in Riverside, CA. The experience and expertise of all new members has already proven invaluable for advancing DATOC analyses.

Exposure to HLB

In February 2018, the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Committee (CPDPC) requested that DATOC explore what constitutes exposure to HLB infection in residential areas within the quarantine zone of Southern California. Over the next year, DATOC members reported to the CPDPC Science Subcommittee on project progress and received feedback to incorporate into further analyses. As the project neared completion, the Science Subcommittee requested that DATOC also include the concept of exposure in commercial groves. A new analysis of commercial exposure was generated and included in [the final report](#), which was presented to the CPDPC in March 2019.

Apparent growth rate of HLB in Southern California

The CPDPC Science Advisory Panel (SAP), advised the CPDPC that the rate of increase in detection of huanglongbing (HLB) should be carefully monitored, to determine at what point regulatory activities needed to change in response. This triggered a request from the CPDPC Operations Subcommittee in September 2018 that DATOC analyze the growth rate of HLB cases in Southern California, to determine if it was following an exponential pattern. DATOC reported preliminary results in February 2019, and incorporated feedback received into further analyses. [The final analysis](#) was completed and reported to the Subcommittee in March 2019.

Protecting commercial groves

In January 2019, the CPDPC put together a task force charged with developing a list of recommended actions commercial citrus growers could take to help protect their groves from HLB. DATOC was then recruited to develop the first draft of those recommendations, along with the scientific rationale for each suggested action. This draft was submitted in February. In March, the task force reviewed the document and provided input. DATOC then submitted a revised second draft. The task force hopes to have a finalized document for growers by May.

Sampling plan for commercial discovery of huanglongbing

The CDFA “Action Plan for Asian Citrus Psyllid and Huanglongbing (Citrus Greening) in California” originally specified that if HLB was found in or near commercial groves, the groves should be sampled for HLB based on a stratified sampling plan (devised for the detection of plum-pox virus) that required sampling 25% of all trees in each grove. Many were concerned that this would be an inefficient use of available resources. At the request of CDFA staff, DATOC developed a [revised sampling protocol](#), based on observed patterns of disease development in commercial citrus in Texas and Florida which focuses sampling effort on the perimeter of groves. The revised plan was approved by the CPDPC and California Secretary for Agriculture in March 2019.