

INCREASING EARLY DETECTION OF INVASIVE SPECIES THROUGH TARGETED OUTREACH

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ABSTRACT

Recent introductions of invasive wood boring insects such as the emerald ash borer and the Asian longhorned beetle in solid wood packing material cost the public hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal funding to manage and control. Our project is designed to increase early detection of invasive forest pests arriving in North America. We will accomplish this by training pest management professionals to search for signs of exotic insects in solid wood packaging in warehouses and how to respond if they find something suspicious. After surveying pest management professionals, we

determined that a simple modification of existing practices would significantly increase early detection of invasive species. We have developed an online course (<http://www.continuinged.purdue.edu/media/pest/invasive/>) to certify pest management professionals for handling exotic pests. We also are executing a public campaign to create a demand for these services. Our hope is that widespread adoption of our procedures will increase the likelihood of detecting newly arrived exotic forest pests before they can escape into the environment.