# Armored Scale Blythe Border Station Sampling / Dispersal Studies

Richard Stouthamer, Joseph Morse, Paul Rugman-Jones, Lindsay Robinson, Alan Urena

> Dept. of Entomology, University of California, Riverside

> > Gillian Watson

**CDFA Plant Pest Diagnostics Center** 

## UCR Sampling of Mexican Avocados at the Blythe Border Station

- CDFA-run Blythe border station receives by far the highest volume of Mexican 'Hass' avocados entering CA
- One carton of avocados per truck is cut by border staff looking for possible internal pests (weevils, fruit flies, seed moth, etc.)
- On all trucks entering CA via Blythe, this carton is held for inspection over a 4.5-day sampling period every 3-4 weeks
- The fruit were transported inside sealed plastic bags to UC Riverside under a protocol outlined in CDFA Permit # 2513







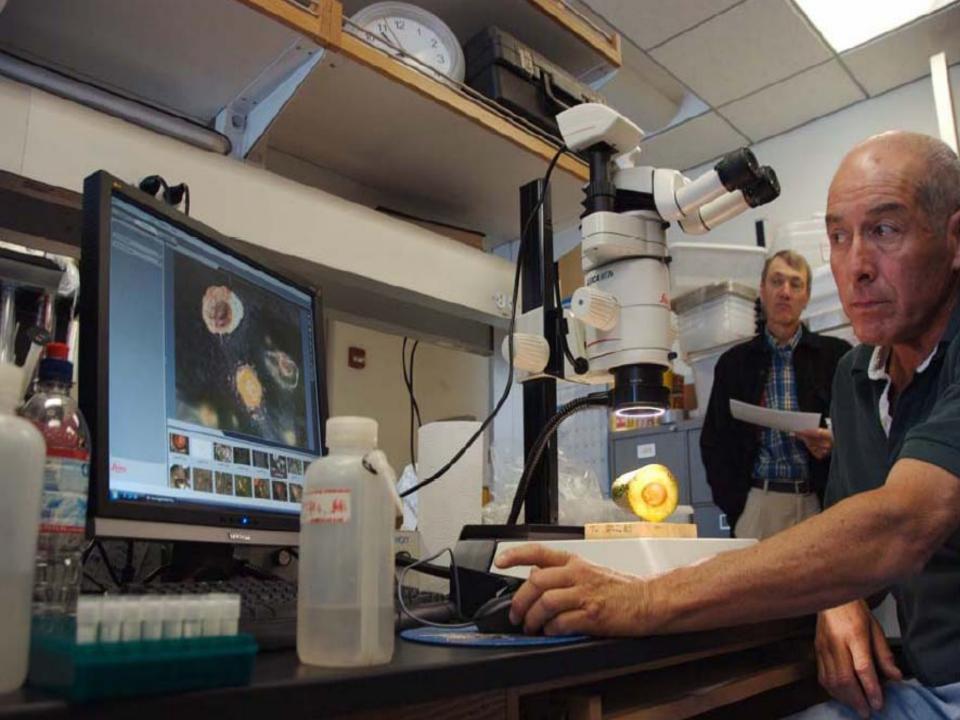


288 Aspen COLD ROOM















## Early survey data will soon appear in print

- Data from our Sept. 2007 Apr. 2008 Survey will appear as a Forum article in the June 2009 issue of the *Journal* of Economic Entomology
- Morse, J. G., P. F. Rugman-Jones, G. W. Watson, L. J. Robinson, J. L. Bi & R. Stouthamer. 2009. High Levels of Exotic Armored Scales on Imported Avocados Raise Concerns Regarding USDA-APHIS' Phytosanitary Risk Assessment. Journal of Economic Entomology (In Press, 11 pages).
  - 1 carton from each of 140 trucks sampled
  - These trucks held 15.6% of the volume entering CA

#### Data / Conclusions in the JEE Forum Article

- 8 species of armored scales detected
  - 7 not known to be present in CA (latania scale is)
  - 4 not known to be present in the U.S. (2 FL, 1 TX)
- Estimated 47.6 million live scales entered CA 9/07-4/08
- Estimated 20.1 million live eggs/crawler
- Conclude that the volume of avocado shipments and levels of live scales post a significant risk to the CA avocado industry and other crops/plants in CA
- Suggest APHIS re-examine their ruling of "low risk"





Abgrallaspis aguacatae



*Hemiberlesia* sp. nr. *lataniae* 

### Sampling is Continuing

- Forum article contains data from 11 4.5-day samples over 9/07-4/08
- Have continued to sample every 3-4 weeks (now have data from 23 samples
- This year we are seeing more
  - Acutaspis albopicta reported from 14 hosts in 13 plant families
  - Diaspis sp. (2) -- unknown host range (reported only from sapote and now avocado)
- Trying to establish scale cultures inside Quarantine
- Emphasis in Year 2 of sampling on parasitoids (not many in Mexican samples)

#### Dominant Species on Mexican Avocados Now Has a Name

Abgrallaspis aguacatae Evans, Watson & Miller was the dominant species in our samples

Evans, G. A., G. W. Watson, & D. R. Miller. 2009. A New Species of armored Scale (Hemiptera: Coccoidae: Diaspididae) Found on Avocado Fruit From Mexico and a Key to the Species of Armored Scales Found on Avocado Worldwide. Zootaxa 1991: 57-68. (30 Jan. 2009)

6 of the specimens used to describe the species were from our survey and are preserved as voucher specimens; these specimens are jointly listed in Evans et al. (2009) and Morse et al. (2009) and are noted as Genbank sequence FJ65731 in the latter