



State of Utah

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## Department of Agriculture and Food

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **UDAF Initiates 2021 Japanese Beetle Eradication Plan**

Salt Lake City, UT – Since 1993 the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) Invasive Insect Program has taken extensive measures to exclude Japanese beetle (JB) from the state. JB is a destructive, invasive pest that feeds on the foliage of over 300 different plants, including many popular and economically important fruit, vegetable and ornamental plants. JB cost infested states approximately \$460 million annually to control the pest and replace damaged host plants.

2020 UDAF trapping data indicates that eradication efforts in Salt Lake County have been highly successful. In 2020, 15 JB were detected in Salt Lake County, a 58% reduction in the number found in the emergency infestation area in 2019. Unfortunately, JB populations increased in Davis County (where no treatments were performed in spring of 2020) and new, small populations were detected in Utah and Weber Counties. In response to this infestation, UDAF has declared an Insect Emergency Infestation and has devised an eradication plan to ensure that the Japanese beetle (JB) does not become established in Utah.

UDAF plans to contract a licensed commercial pest control operator to apply a non-restricted use pesticide, Acelepryn® SC, on irrigated turf in areas identified as having a high risk of JB establishment. This pesticide is proven effective in controlling JB and has low toxicity for bees, as well as humans, pets, birds and earthworms. Pesticide application is scheduled to begin in April and end in early May. Though the product has an excellent safety record, UDAF will be taking extraordinary supplemental efforts to ensure pesticide applications have minimal impact on residents and the environment. The pest control company chosen will be trained in best practices for pollinator protection and registered beekeepers will be notified in advance of applications. Owners or occupants of property may prohibit treatment by presenting an affidavit from their attending physician or physician assistant to the department. Persons granted a medical waiver will be required to complete alternative, approved non-chemical measures.

UDAF will be hosting a virtual public meeting to provide more information about this eradication plan on Thursday, March 25, from 6:00-8:00 pm at <https://facebook.com/utahagriculture>.

Questions or concerns may be directed to State Entomologist Kristopher Watson at (801)982-2311 or [UDAF-insects@utah.gov](mailto:UDAF-insects@utah.gov). Additional information can be found at <http://ag.utah.gov/jberadication>

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