

## IV.4 Exotic Pests and Diseases

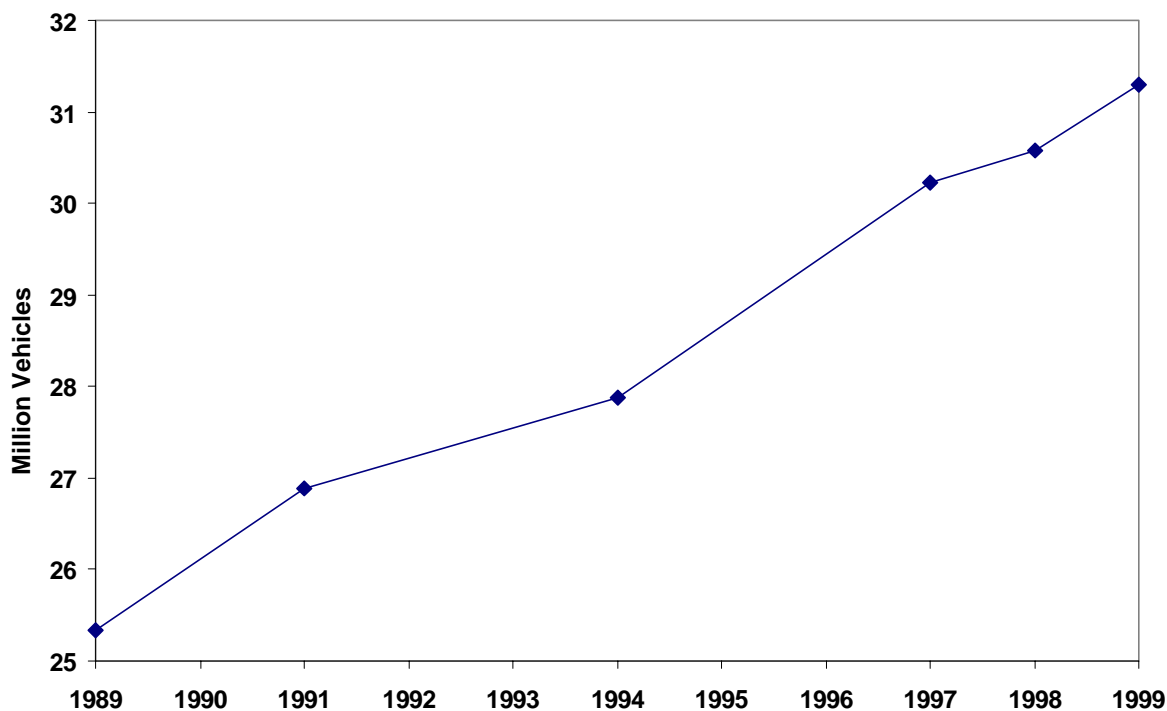
**A** pest can be any plant, animal, virus or disease pathogen whose introduction and establishment in a region causes negative consequences. A pest is commonly considered “exotic” wherever it is non-indigenous or beyond its range or natural zone of potential dispersal. Exotic pests and diseases can impact the natural and urban environment, can be costly to agriculture and other industries, and can even affect human health and safety. To prevent that, the United States and California have developed exotic pest and disease exclusion measures to monitor national and international travelers and shipments that may be accidentally or intentionally carrying exotic pests or diseases. Should those precautions fail, additional measures may be taken to prevent establishment or spread of introduced pests and diseases.

- Exotic pests and diseases can have a number of economic effects on agriculture. They can decrease crop yields and quality, lead to livestock depopulation and have negative impacts on water resources. In addition, infestations often result in costs for chemical, biological or physical control.

- Exotic pests and diseases may arrive through many pathways including the importation of infected plants or animals, natural migration of infected animals, on equipment or vehicles, and on the bodies and possessions of travelers. Some pests, such as citrus canker in Florida, have been introduced to other parts of the United States but have not been found in California. Other pests have been prevented from entering the United States or have been eradicated. For example, foot-and-mouth disease was eradicated from the United States in 1929.

FIGURE 60

**Vehicles Monitored by CDFA at California Border Agricultural Inspection Stations, 1989-1999**



Source: California Department of Food and Agriculture, Plant Health and Pest Prevention Service, *Report to the Western Plant Board, Annual Reports, 1990-2000.*

- As national and international commerce and travel increase, so does the chance of exotic pests being introduced to the state. California and the United States operate a number of programs designed to exclude, eradicate or contain the spread of exotic pests and diseases. The USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service spent \$652 million in 1999, about two-thirds of which was on exotic pests and diseases. The California Department of Food and Agriculture has an annual budget for exotic pest and disease programs of about \$40 million for plant pests and about \$4 million for animal pests. Some pest and disease exclusion programs are funded jointly by state and federal government, while others are specific to the state or federal level.

TABLE 45

**Incoming Commercial Shipments of Plants and Animals Recorded at California Pest Exclusion Border Stations, 1997-1999\***

	1997	1998	1999
Total Plant Shipments	NA	304,917	363,752
Total Animal Shipments	21,809	17,818	27,469
Individual Animals			
Poultry	4,670,499	1,945,917	6,745,228
Swine	1,598,259	1,683,198	2,049,789
Cattle & Calves	576,983	520,525	783,985
Sheep	556,974	357,273	494,113
Fish	722,940	185,650	255,250
Rabbits	75,577	26,522	92,697
Goats	48,122	49,552	70,572
Horses	11,809	7,741	14,990
Miscellaneous**	458	872	3,166
Poultry Eggs (Fertile), Dozens	9,691,050	17,156,070	23,970,480
Total Individual Animals, Excluding Eggs and Fish	7,538,681	4,591,600	10,254,540

\*Recorded at interstate borders, not international entrances.

\*\*Lamas, alpacas, camelidae, bison, ostrich, etc.

Source: California Department of Food and Agriculture, Animal Health and Food Safety Services, 2000.

- CDFA reported monitoring 363,752 commercial plant shipments in 1999 at its 16 California border agricultural inspection stations. Of these, 1,803 shipments were rejected, and another 27,052 were sent under “Warning-Hold Inspection Notices” to the destination County Agricultural Commissioners for final disposition. In the same year, CDFA intercepted 70,835 non-commercial lots that were infested or not properly certified for entry into the state<sup>5</sup>.
- From 1975 through 1999, about \$277 million of state and federal funds was spent on detection and eradication of fruit flies in California. About \$260 million was spent on the Mediterranean Fruit Fly, but efforts were also made to detect and eradicate the Mexican Fruit Fly, Oriental Fruit Fly, Caribbean Fruit Fly, Guava Fruit Fly, Melon Fly, and Peach Fruit Fly<sup>6</sup>.
- In 1999, 26 “A-rated” terrestrial noxious weeds (some of which are exotic) were under eradication, control or containment on approximately 7,600 acres in California. The California Food and Agricultural Code defines noxious weeds as “any species of plant which is, or is liable to be, detrimental or destructive and difficult to control or eradicate.” “A-rated” weeds are perceived as the most serious and therefore require state or county action.

---

<sup>5</sup> Source: California Department of Food and Agriculture, Plant Health and Inspection Service, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Source: CDFA, Plant Health and Pest Prevention Service, *Report to the Western Plant Board, Annual Report, April 2000*.