

Exotic moth policy must change

MY mother always admonished, Say something nice. Here goes: The state and USDA should be commended for their light brown apple moth eradication strategy that uses pheromones instead of a hard chemical. Of course, there is more.

Pheromones are classified as a pesticide because they are designed to get rid of the LBAM. But the use of pheromones to eradicate a leaf roller has no scientific precedence. Also, it is illegal for any pesticide registrant to say their products are nontoxic. How can USDA and the California Department of Food and Agriculture legally make this claim?

The truth be known, our ag friends are going along with this sham out of fear of lost exports created when USDA/CDFA put the bug on its "A" list. And this greedy export strategy has backfired on the U.S. Mexico and Canada already have restricted imports of crops and plants from infested areas.

Wrongheaded

It is wrongheaded to think city folks care about agriculture's export issues, especially one that is trumped up by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. They do care about being bombed by pesticides of any kind. Our ag friends, instead of supporting this sham, should be calling for a declassification of the LBAM as a federally quarantined pest. Like always, this is about money, and free trade talk aside, the U.S. government is more interested in keeping competitive exports out than adopting a control/containment trade and pest policy. It is easier to take federal money for eradication (read: spraying city folks) of LBAM that has already brought \$89.5 million to CDFA. The LBAM wars, like others we are involved in, always demand more money.

The "partnership and resolve" that USDA Secretary Ed Shafer promised on his recent state visit won't eradicate the LBAM from the state. Certainly, the USDA/CDFA will not do it with pheromones (aerial or hand-applied) as the central military tactic. USDA economics are based on antiquated data. The insect is a minor pest at worst, wherever it exists in the world. It is not a quarantine pest in Europe, where it exists in trading partner Great Britain. The LBAM is not causing ecological damage anywhere on the globe.

Public concerns

The public does not generally respond to new technology itself but rather the credibility of those introducing the technologies. With novel technologies, public debate reflects public perceptions of the messenger, not the message.

Uphshot: It is much harder to foster trust than to erode it, which is shown

EDITORIALLY SPEAKING

by urban media coverage of the LBAM.

If avoidable food scares are to be stopped, it is up to the Food and Drug Administration and USDA, though some 15 agencies are involved. Of the some \$1.7 billion spent, USDA and FDA ac-

count for 90% of the expenditures, while USDA is responsible for only 20% of the food supply. In contrast, FDA is responsible for 80% of the food supply and gets only 24% of those dollars.

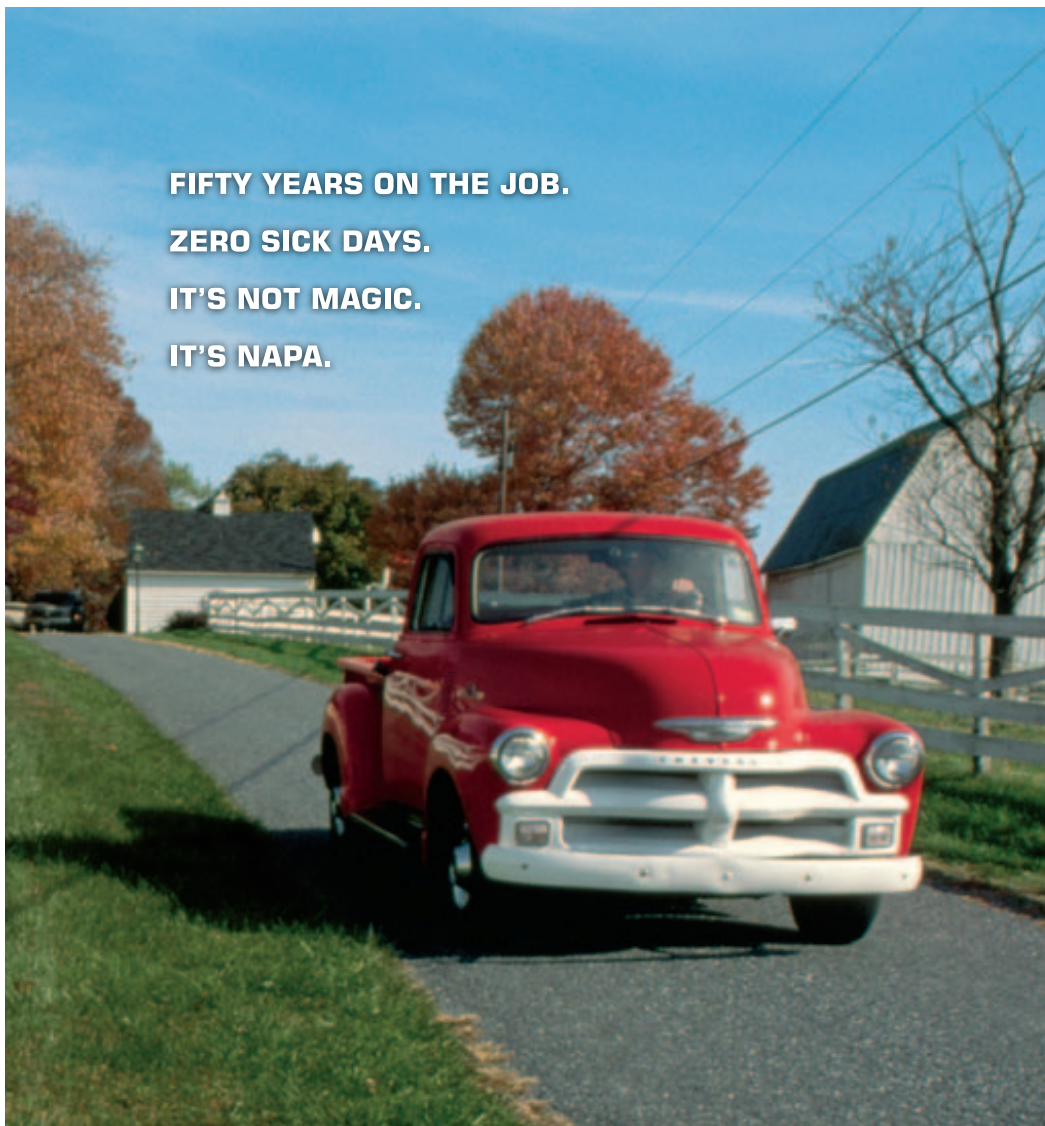
What next

Is it any wonder the U.S. has experienced melamine-tainted dog and hog food, or fatalities from the anticlotting drug heparin or diethylene glycol antihistamine tablets? The common cause in all cases is Chinese manufacturing.

"If the U.S. cannot adequately protect our pharmaceuticals and foods from China, what contaminants do you suppose are in the agricultural and specialty ag products that come out of China for distribution in the U.S.?" asks Lon Records, president of Target, a specialty-products company, Santa Fe Springs.

He adds, "Production ag and the specialty markets including the California nursery market do not need another surprise."

FIFTY YEARS ON THE JOB.
ZERO SICK DAYS.
IT'S NOT MAGIC.
IT'S NAPA.



At NAPA, we have over 310,000 parts. Parts that are built to stand up to the tough demands of your business. From heavy-duty batteries to tools to filters to fluids, if it carries the NAPA name, you know it not only meets the manufacturer's specs, it often exceeds them. It's no wonder people who count on their parts count on NAPA.

800-LET-NAPA / www.NAPAonline.com



LEN RICHARDSON
EDITOR
lrichardson@
farmprogress.com



Get The Good Stuff.®