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[State Agricultural Officials Urge Residents to Check Plants for Spotted Lanternfly](#)

Discovery of Single Adult Insect Highlights Importance of Vigilant Reporting of this Pest



A single, dead, adult spotted lanternfly was found in a potted plant in Boston in Dec. 2018

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) announced today that a single dead specimen of the invasive pest known as spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) was reported and confirmed at a private residence in Boston. As a result, MDAR is urging the public to check for signs of spotted lanternfly adults in any potted plants that they may have received over the holiday season and to report any potential sightings of this pest on MDAR's [online reporting form](#) by taking photographs and collecting a specimen if possible. Residents should look for large, gray insects, about one inch long, with black spots and red underwings.

“Early detection plays an important role in the protection of the economic and ecological resources of our state from invasive species,” said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “We ask all residents who have received potted plants this past December to help us protect Massachusetts’ environment and agricultural industries by checking for and reporting signs of spotted lanternfly.”

The insect appears to have been unintentionally transported this past December in a shipment of poinsettia plants originating from Pennsylvania. Because only one dead adult insect was found, and spotted lanternfly dies off when a hard frost hits, there is currently no evidence that this pest has become established in Massachusetts. However, additional surveys are planned in the area to confirm that no other occurrences of lanternfly are present.

Spotted lanternfly is an invasive sap-feeding insect from Asia that was first found in the United States in 2014 in Pennsylvania. While the main host plant of this pest is tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), spotted lanternfly attacks a variety of trees, shrubs, and vines, and has the potential to impact a broad range of agricultural commodities, including apples, peaches, grapes/wine, maple syrup, as well as the ornamental nursery industry.

February 21st, 2019 Jennifer Forman Orth Posted in [insects](#), [spotted lanternfly](#)

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