PRESS RELEASE

California Environmental Protection Agency
Department of Pesticide Regulation

For more information, contact:
Veda Federighi, DPR Communications
(916) 654-1117

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NEW FREE DIRECTORY OF SUPPLIERS
OF "GOOD BUGS" FOR GARDENS AND FARMS

SACRAMENTO -- Anyone looking for "good bugs" for their garden or farm is invited to send for a free new booklet available from the Department of Pesticide Regulation.

"You can find out where to buy everything from ladybugs and lacewings to mosquito fish and parasitic nematodes," said DPR Director James W. Wells. "There are controls for many insects, including aphids, mites and beetles, as well as controls for weeds like Scotch broom, Russian thistle, and puncturevine."

The 31-page booklet, which goes by the unwieldy title of "Suppliers of Beneficial Organisms in North America," includes 95 suppliers of more than 126 different organisms used for biological control of pests on small and large farms, and in backyard gardens.

The listing is an updated version of the 1989 edition, Wells said. "We try to revise it every couple of years. Each year, the number of suppliers and the number of beneficial organisms increases. Biological control is a very exciting field--there's a lot of interest in alternatives to pesticides, and a lot of work is going on in this area."

The booklet includes the names, addresses and phone numbers of sources of beneficial organisms throughout the United States and Canada, along with their product line, whether they sell wholesale or retail, and whether they have a catalog or brochure available. Also noted is whether they supply free information and consulting.

"Our booklet doesn't have any information on how to **use** beneficial organisms," said Wells. "If we did, it would have to be the size of an encyclopedia. You can sometimes get information like that from the supplier, and you can always call the University of California Cooperative Extension office in your county for help."

Wells added that using a beneficial organism to fight pests usually takes a little more knowledge than using a pesticide.

"With a chemical pesticide, you can read the label to know how much to use, when to apply

it, how to get best results. And you can usually see the results fairly quickly.

"With natural enemies, it's a little different," Wells continued. "Although the results are more gradual, they are often more long-lasting, since you are establishing a system of natural checks and balances. But to succeed, it is important to know the pest you are dealing with, and the best way to approach it.

"That's why farmers call in integrated pest management (IPM) specialists, who know how to diagnose problems and recommend solutions. Home gardeners can take advantage of the tremendous expertise at the UC Cooperative Extension, or ask one of the suppliers in the booklet for advice. Many of them have literature available on the beneficial organisms and how to apply them," said Wells.

The booklet is indexed to help match suppliers with the specific natural enemies they sell. There is also an index of beneficial organisms, with scientific name and target pest. Not listed are biological controls that are single-celled organisms (microbial pesticides, such as *Bacillus* thuringiensis), which are considered pesticides under state and federal law and are widely available.

Although several natural enemies for various whiteflies are listed, there is no commercially available "good bug" to fight ash whitefly. A state-sponsored biological control program aimed at ash whitefly will continue this year, with releases of a parasitic wasp that is proving very effective in locations where it has been released in the past.

Free, single copies of the booklet are available from the Department of Pesticide Regulation, Environmental Monitoring and Pest Management Branch, Attn: Beneficial Organisms Booklet, 1220 N Street, P.O.Box 942871, Sacramento 94271-0001. To order by phone, call (916) 654-1141.

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