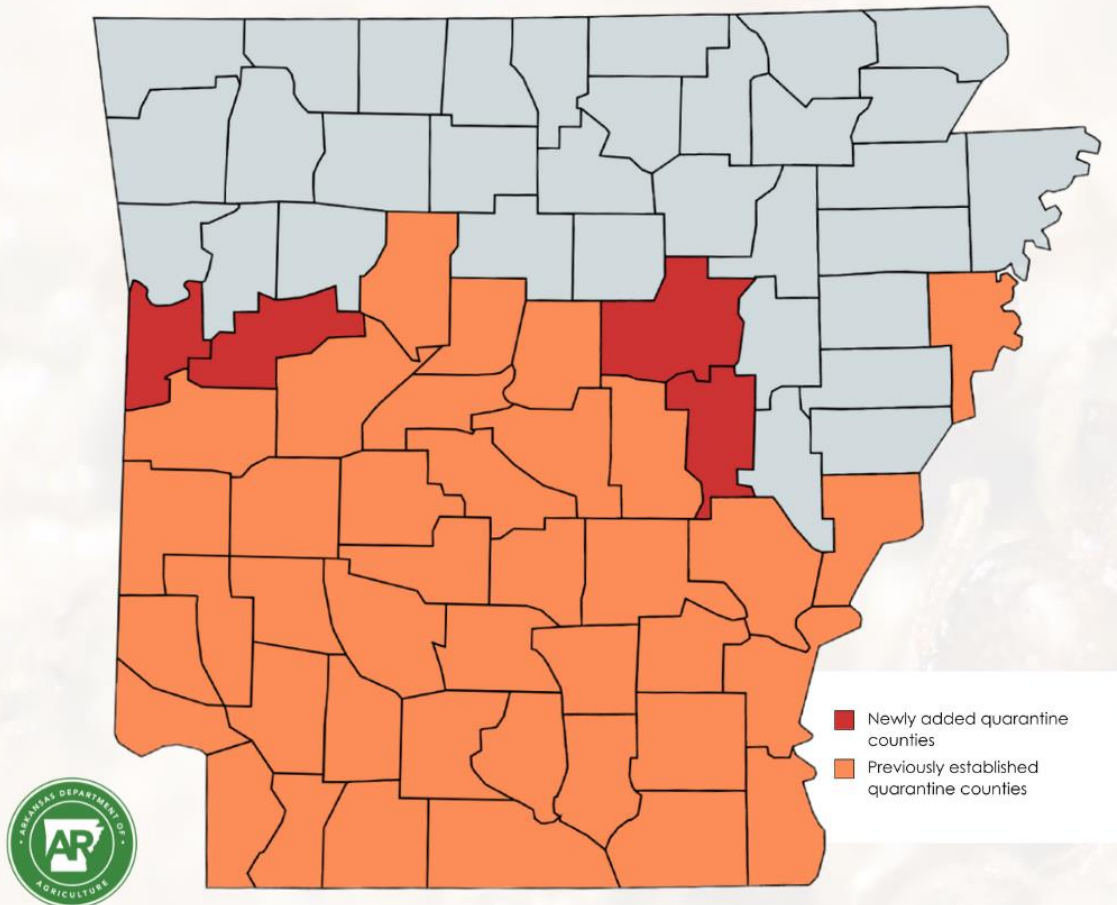


Four Arkansas Counties Added to the Federal Imported Fire Ant Quarantine

Kelly Loftin

Logan, Prairie, Sebastian and White Counties were recently added to the Federal Imported Fire Ant Quarantine area. With these additions, 43 Arkansas counties are included in the current Federal Imported Fire Ant Quarantine. In addition to the expansion in Arkansas, three counties were added to the quarantine in North Carolina, one county added to Oklahoma and five counties added to the Virginia quarantine area. The additions are in response to imported fire ant surveys conducted by state regulators officials in coordination with the USDA.

New Arkansas counties added to fire ant quarantine area



Map courtesy of the Arkansas Department of Agriculture.

The Federal Imported Fire Ant Quarantine is in place to prevent the artificial movement of invasive imported fire ants into non-infested areas. Movement of regulated items from quarantined areas into non-quarantined areas is restricted unless specific actions are taken to ensure the regulated items are fire ant free. Regulated items can move freely within the quarantine area. The list of regulated items include:

- Nursery stock with soil or potting media
- Grass sod
- Baled hay stored in contact with the soil
- Baled straw stored in contact with the soil
- Soil
- Used soil moving equipment

Does this mean that business and producers cannot ship regulated items from a quarantined area into a non-quarantined area? Not necessarily.

Regulated items can be transported from a quarantined area to a non-quarantined area if the producer/business has entered a compliance agreement with the USDA and Arkansas Department of Agriculture. The compliance agreement details the steps necessary to move the regulated items while not moving imported fire ants.

How will a buyer/receiver of a regulated item know that the commodity has been treated or handled in a manner necessary to prevent fire ant movement into a non-quarantined area? The holder of the compliance agreement will be issued an official stamp that shows the buyers/receivers that the commodity had been treated/handled in a manner that will prevent imported fire ant movement.

Additional information including interactive maps, approved quarantine treatment options, movement of baled hay, and the Imported Fire Ant Program Manual is available through USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/plant-pest-and-disease-programs/pests-and-diseases/imported-fire-ants>