

# Thousand Cankers Disease of Black Walnut

## *Disease Recently Discovered in the Northeastern Area*

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Forest Service  
Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry



**Description:** Dead and dying eastern black walnut trees, victims of thousand cankers disease (TCD), were discovered in July 2011 north of Philadelphia in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. TCD involves the walnut twig beetle and a canker-causing fungus. The Pennsylvania discovery is the first reported find of this disease in the region served by the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry and the third known infestation in the East following discoveries in Knoxville, TN, and Richmond, VA. TCD was first seen killing eastern black walnuts across the Western United States in the 1990s. Repeated attacks over 8 to 10 years result in numerous cankers that begin to merge on the tree, hence the name of the disease.

### Key Issues:

- Eastern black walnut could disappear from its native range.
- Eastern black walnut is one of the most valuable tree species for veneer, lumber, woodworking, and nuts. A single tree can sell for tens of thousands of dollars.
- Many mills representing hundreds of employees depend on the availability of high-value walnut logs.
- Individuals and companies have invested in walnut plantations and managed walnut woodlands.
- It is essential to understand the behavior of the pests in native walnut woodlands and plantations.
- Landowners and managers need information and education to battle TCD.
- A standardized survey technique must be developed for early detection.
- Management protocols are also needed to contain the disease.

### Accomplishments:

- Helped with a TCD workshop in Indiana where many plant health regulators and forest managers in Eastern States learned about the disease. Most States have enacted or are considering quarantines.
- Conducting detection surveys throughout the native range of walnut in the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry region.
- Confirmed the effectiveness of a beetle lure and trap.
- Reprinted the national thousand cankers disease Pest Alert.
- Shared information with regional groups, including States and the National Forest System.

### Budget History:

Thousand Cankers Disease (Dollars in thousands)		
FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
\$6.0	\$4.2	\$186.7

### Future Direction:

- Deploy traps throughout the native range of eastern black walnut.
- Launch multistate early detection surveys to retard the artificial spread of thousand cankers disease.
- Promote walnut management options that will reduce tree vulnerability.
- Test a variety of management alternatives including prevention, treatments, sanitation, and disposal.

**Tony L. Ferguson**, Director  
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
610-557-4103 (-4177 FAX)  
[ferguson@fs.fed.us](mailto:ferguson@fs.fed.us)

**Mark Buccowich**, Asst. Director  
11 Campus Blvd., Suite 200  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
610-557-4180 (-4136 FAX)  
[mbuccowich@fs.fed.us](mailto:mbuccowich@fs.fed.us)

**Manfred Mielke**, Plant Pathologist  
192 Folwell Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
651-649-5267 (5238-FAX)  
[mailto:mmielke@fs.fed.us](mailto:mailto:mmielke@fs.fed.us)

