



# Pest e-alerts



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Entomology and Plant Pathology, Oklahoma State University  
127 Noble Research Center, Stillwater, OK 74078  
405.744.5527

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## Oklahoma Wildfires and the USDA Imported Fire Ant Quarantine

Brad Kard, Urban and Structural Extension Entomologist

Justin Talley, Livestock Extension Entomologist

Tom Royer, IPM Extension Entomologist

Eric Rebek, Extension Entomologist

Phillip Mulder, Dept. Head and Extension Entomologist

Charles Luper, Kevin Shelton, and Charlie Konemann (PSEP)

The current massive range wildfires in Oklahoma have caused a shortage of forage to sustain surviving livestock. Ranchers and farmers from outside the extensively damaged areas are shipping hay and feed into these non-quarantine fire-devastated counties. Concerning the **Red Imported Fire Ant (RIFA)**; scientific name *Solenopsis invicta*, also known as the Imported Fire Ant (IFA), the USDA-APHIS has placed restrictions against hay and straw movement out of quarantine counties in southern Oklahoma. ODAFF maintains a Facebook page with recent information about hay donations and **RIFA** (see below). A June 1, 2016, map of USA **RIFA** quarantine counties is also included below. Hay being moved out of quarantine counties that does not meet the conditions listed below must be certified **RIFA**-free by either federal or state inspection before being shipped. It would be prudent that the very helpful and greatly appreciated ranchers and farmers that are shipping hay or other materials to the fire-ravaged areas be sure to ship from non-quarantine counties, or otherwise take action to be certain all shipped materials are **RIFA**-free.

### OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND FORESTRY

2800 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73105

#### [ODAFF Imported Fire Ant and Hay Bale Shipment Information](#)

For More Information Contact:

Mr. Kenny Naylor, Director of Consumer Protection Services, ODAFF. (405) 522-5879.

ODAFF Facebook: <http://www.oda.state.ok.us/odaff-followus.htm> April 16, 2018

**ODAFF Facebook comments:** As many of you are aware, hay donations are being accepted for producers impacted by recent wildfires. Just as a reminder, there are counties in southern Oklahoma and northern Texas that are included in the imported fire ant quarantine.

Following is information from USDA/APHIS regarding under what conditions baled hay can leave a quarantine area without restrictions:

Baled hay that meets any of the requirements below is not regulated and has no movement restrictions:

- For baled hay that is stacked, all bales except the bottom layer that is in direct contact with the ground.
- Hay that is cut, baled, loaded, and shipped without storage.
- Baled hay that is stored on an impervious surface such as hard pan (highly compressed soil), asphalt, concrete, etc.
- Baled hay that is stored elevated above the soil on pallets or tires or stored on landscaping cloth placed over the soil.

If you have additional questions before moving hay, please contact Kenny Naylor, Director of Consumer Protections Services for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry: [Kenny.naylor@ag.ok.gov](mailto:Kenny.naylor@ag.ok.gov) , (405) 522-5879. If you are not in the imported fire ant quarantine area, these restrictions do not apply.

For more Q & A on baled hay movement, please go to:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/BaledHayIndustryAlert.pdf> [Document also attached separately]

Map of current Quarantine Area: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/.../firan.../downloads/fireant-2.pdf>



Photo courtesy of





United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

# Imported Fire Ant Quarantine

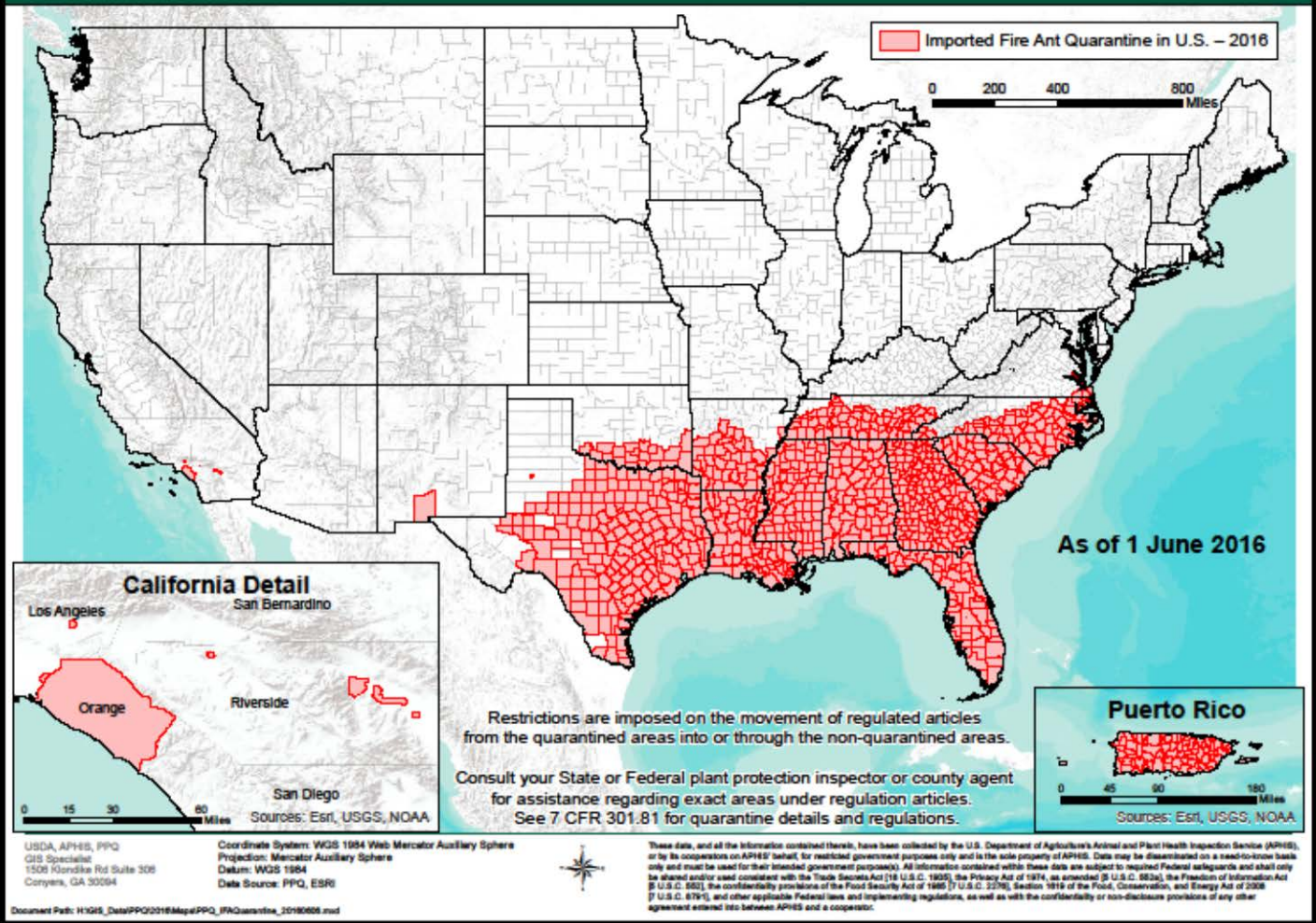


Photo courtesy of





## Wildfire Donation Information

Phone numbers and email contact information for hay donations and pick-up, and fencing supplies in Oklahoma for wildfire 2018 relief efforts

### Hay Donation and Pick-Up Contact Numbers

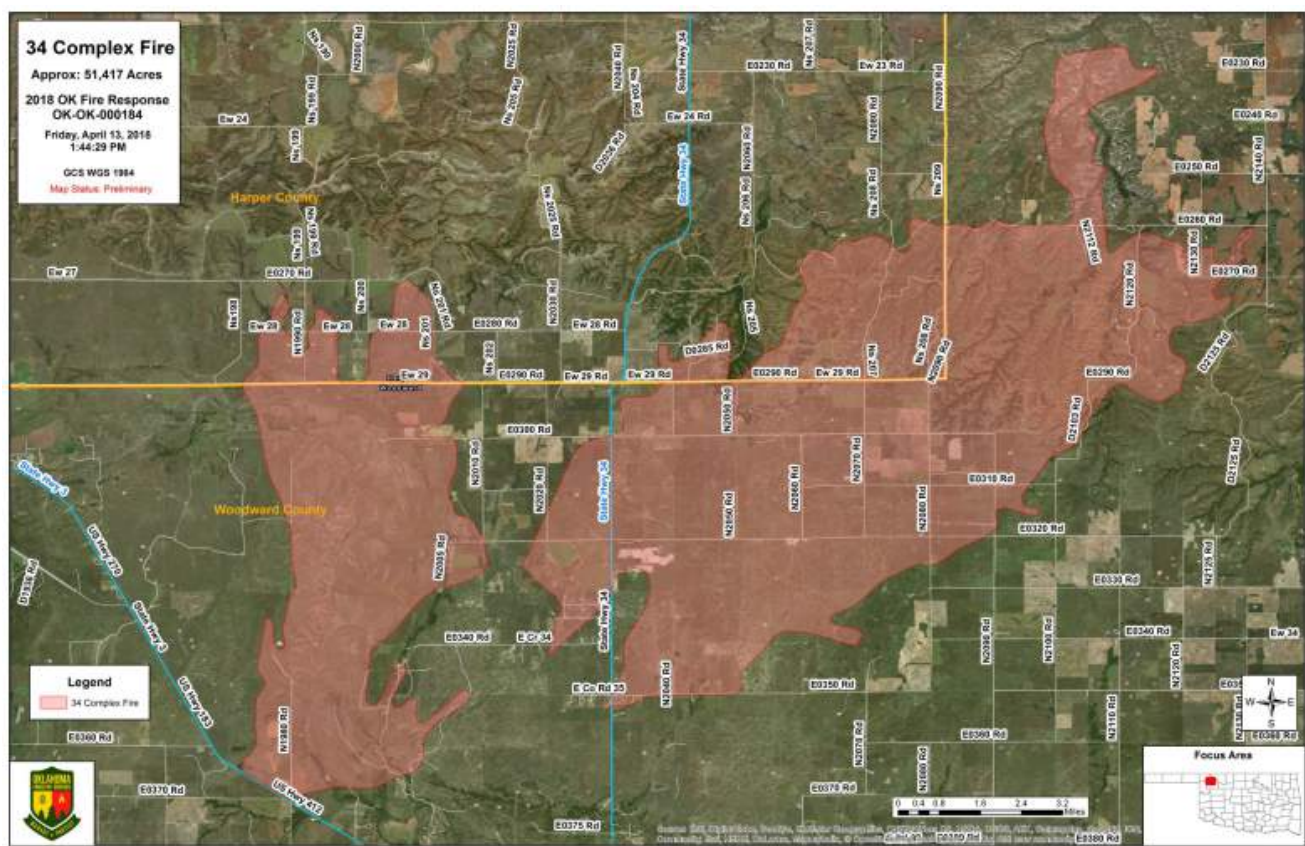
(405) 590-0106

(405) 397-7912

(405) 496-9329

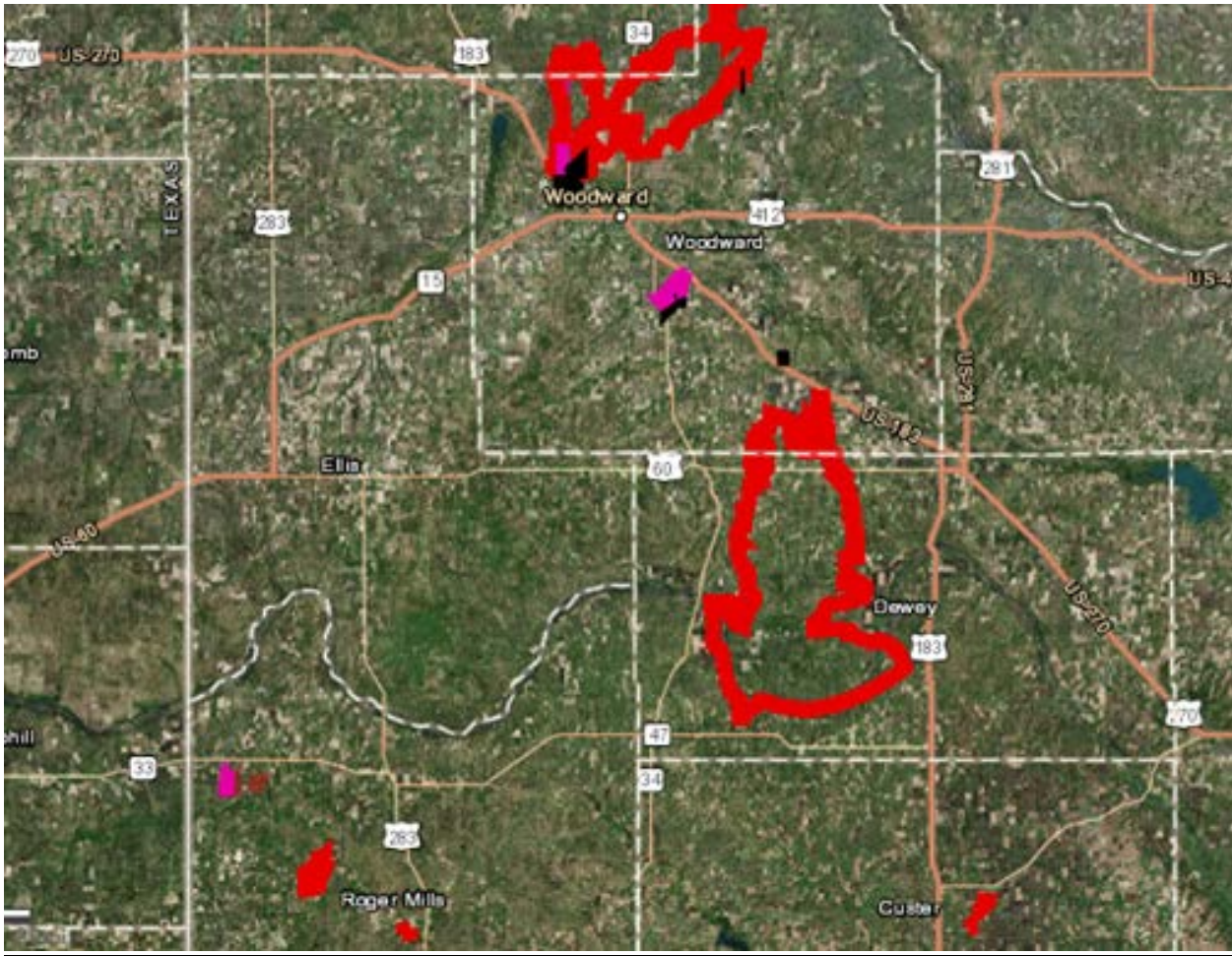
Fencing supplies, milk replacer and other agriculture supplies are being received at many of the drop off sites as well. Use phone numbers above to determine drop-off locations

Email Address for Hay Inquiries: [WildfireHayDonations@okstate.edu](mailto:WildfireHayDonations@okstate.edu)



April 13, 2018 Fire Complex Map





**April 13, 2018 Fire Complex Map**



**Rhea Fire  
SE of Leedey  
Dewey County**

14 April 2018  
1000 Hours  
241,280 Acres

*Map not final.  
Briefing Document Only.*



**April 14, 2018 Fire Complex Map**

### Red Imported Fire Ant worker (Sometimes called the Imported Fire Ant-IFA)

Fire ant colonies contain several sizes of workers, ranging in length from 1/8 to 1/4 inch (3.5 to 7.0 mm; antennae not included). They have a painful sting, and can extensively infest pastures and rangeland with numerous mounds that can damage farm equipment. They also cause damage to highways, roadways and airport runways, and readily infest electrical meter boxes and equipment. They can easily attack and kill small livestock like chickens, and ground-nesting birds. They currently infest more than 250 million acres in six southeastern states, and millions of additional acres as they spread west and north. Their current range is extensive as illustrated on the map above. **RIFAs** are prolific reproducers, and one infested acre of land can produce more than 90,000 new queens each year. Swarming occurs several times per year, thereby extending the RIFA range to many more acres.

There are several commercial insecticides and toxic baits available that kill **RIFA**. Treating individual mounds wherever they are found is recommended. However, when hundreds-to-many thousands of **RIFA** colonies and mounds are established, control within pastures and rangeland becomes a difficult, continuous challenge.

### Red Imported Fire Ant Worker - **RIFA**



Top View

1/8 to 1/4 inch



Left Side View

Photos Courtesy A. Noble, Bugwood.org

### RIFA Identification

If ants are found on hay and feed or other materials being shipped into the wildfire areas, the ants should be collected into a small container and brought to their local County Extension Office for identification. They can also be identified on-site by ODAFF or Federal inspectors to be sure they are not **RIFA**. In addition, The Plant Disease and Insect Diagnostic Laboratory (PDIDL) in OSU's Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology can provide positive **RIFA** identification. Only dead ants can be sent to PDIDL. Ants can be killed by freezing or by placing them in rubbing alcohol. Contact PDIDL, Dept. EPP, 127 NRC, OSU, Stillwater, OK 74078-3033. Office: 405-744-9961; fax: 405-744-6039. <http://entopl.okstate.edu/pddl/pddl/pdidi-form.pdf> provides the short insect ID request form. Very clear, high-resolution Digital Images are sometimes adequate for ant identification. Send images and the request form by email: [sickplants@okstate.edu](mailto:sickplants@okstate.edu). However, to positively identify the very small **RIFA**, physical specimens must be received by the PDIDL.

## RIFA Management

The best time to inspect hay bales for **RIFA** is at their point-of-origin, before loading onto trucks. However, if RIFA-infested bales are identified at 'drop-off' locations or feeding sites, ODAFF inspectors should be immediately notified for instructions on addressing the infestation and disposition or treatment of areas around **RIFA** infested bales. If hay is received from an outside-of-**RIFA** quarantine area, the same guidelines listed above by ODAFF should be followed.

There are several commercial insecticides and toxic baits available that control **RIFA**. Treating individual **RIFA** mounds with insecticide coupled with a broadcast application of **RIFA** bait that is approved for pastures is recommended. If **RIFA**-infested bale(s) of hay are identified, it is recommended that these bale(s) be either shipped back to the point-of-origin or placed in a separate area at the drop-off location. For **RIFA**-infested bales remaining at the drop-off location, one control method that has been proven effective is scattering Extinguish+® fire ant bait on the soil around the infested bales, then applying a perimeter treatment around the entire hay storage area with Sevin® (DO NOT APPLY ANY OF THESE PRODUCTS DIRECTLY ON ANY HAY BALE). Currently, there are no approved insecticides that can be applied directly on hay bales intended for immediate consumption by cattle or other livestock. If hay bales become **RIFA**-infested after being placed into cattle feeding areas, then remove the animals and treat the areas with Extinguish+ or Amdro Pro®. Livestock must not be fed in these treated areas until at least 7 days after treatment.

Extinguish® is another **RIFA** bait that can be used successfully. It is recommended that the soil areas immediately adjacent to infested bales be treated at a rate of 1.0 to 1.5 pounds per acre just like **RIFA**-infested pasture would be treated. This ensures that any foraging ants can take the bait and feed it to their nest mates. The difference between Extinguish and Extinguish+ is that Extinguish does not work as rapidly as Extinguish+, but there is no waiting period for grazing or harvest with Extinguish.

Be sure to follow label directions when using **RIFA** baits or any other pesticides. When bales in the bait-treated areas are re-inspected and deemed **RIFA** free, they can be used to feed livestock.

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**Editors: Eric Rebek, Ph.D., and Justin Talley, Ph.D.     Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service**

The pesticide information presented in this publication was current with federal and state regulations at the time of printing. The user is responsible for determining that the intended use is consistent with the label of the product being used. Use pesticides safely. Read and follow label directions. The information given herein is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Cooperative Extension Service is implied.

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