Douglas Main’s article “Blight Threatens California’s Citrus Trees” is an informative piece about the emergence of devastating disease for citrus plants. The “huanglongbing” bacterium, more commonly referred to as citrus greening, originally formed in the areas around China. Although the disease had remained in the western areas of the globe for decades, it has very recently begun to migrate its way towards the United States. The cause of the spread is believed to be a result from the migration of a native pest, the Asian citrus psyllid. Because there is no known cure for citrus greening at this point, many officials worry over the possible consequences.

Says Joel Nelson, the president of the California Citrus Mutal, “it’s a gutshot.” Florida alone has lost roughly 3.6 billion dollars as a result of citrus greening. However, precautionary measures have been taken in an attempt to resolve the issue. Quarantines have been placed, pesticides have been sprayed, and even iPhone apps have been created to help spread awareness over the bacterium. As for how the Asian citrus psyllid was able to spread within the United States, it is not fully understood. Ultimately, officials like Joel Nelson are responsible for containing the spread to the best of their abilities.

I think that the spread of this disease is likely more significant than the general public may initially believe. However, I found the precautionary measures to be the most interesting part of the article. Spraying pesticides may be useful in preventing the spread of the disease, but I wonder how safe they may be for the environment. It’s a debate that has been popping up more and more frequently and it’s a legitimate conversation to bring up. Are there not other ways to prevent the spread of citrus greening?

Main, Douglas M. "Blight Threatens California’s Citrus Trees ." *The New York*  
     *Times* 17 Apr. 2012: n. pag. *The New York Times*. Web. 19 Apr. 2012.   
     <http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/>.