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## **A new biocontrol agent, the stem feeder beetle *Thamnurgus euphorbiae* Küster (Coleoptera: Scolytidae) from Italy to control leafy spurge in the U.S.**

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**A New Biocontrol Agent, the Stem Feeder Beetle  
*Thamnurgus euphorbiae* Küster (Coleoptera: Scolytidae)  
from Italy to Control Leafy Spurge in the U.S.**

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*Thamnurgus euphorbiae* Küster (Coleoptera: Scolytidae), a univoltine stem feeder recorded from *Euphorbia characias* L. in Italy, was selected as a candidate for biological control of leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) in North America. Its potential host range was studied at the USDA-ARS-EBCL Rome laboratory from 1992 to 1998. Of 40 plant species or varieties in 13 families tested, the beetle oviposited on and completed its life cycle only on plants in the subgenus *Esula* of the genus *Euphorbia*. Six North American *Euphorbia* species, including *E. incisa* and *E. robusta*, trees in the families Pinaceae and Ulmaceae were also tested against *T. euphorbiae* and none of them received damage or eggs. The restricted host range suggests use of this beetle as a biological control agent against leafy spurge in North America and therefore, release in the field is proposed. A petition of introduction was prepared and submitted to the Technical Advisory Group to introduce and release this beetle in the U.S.

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