

Subject: Federal Order for U.S. Imports of Potatoes from Prince Edward Island (PEI), Canada to Prevent the Entry or Introduction of *Synchytrium endobioticum*, the Causative Agent of Potato Wart

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective January 26, 2015, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will require new conditions associated with the importation of potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*) from Prince Edward Island in Canada to prevent the entry or introduction into the United States of the causative agent (*Synchytrium endobioticum*) of potato wart. *S. endobioticum* is a harmful plant pest that could spread via host commodities imported from foreign countries where this pest is currently present.

Potato wart is a serious disease of cultivated potato that is not known to be present in the United States. Prince Edward Island in Canada is the only region where *S. endobioticum* is present that is also approved to export potatoes to the United States. With few effective measures to control the fungus and a limited capacity for natural spread, potato wart can be introduced through infected seed potatoes and movement of infested soil, making effective control possible primarily by appropriate production and handling practices and statutory measures.

APHIS is taking these actions to prevent the introduction of potato wart into the United States. The attached Federal Order outlines the requirements for the import of tablestock, bulk, and seed potatoes.

For additional information regarding this program, please call Senior Regulatory Specialist William D. Aley at 301-851-2130 or write to him at <William.D.Aley@aphis.usda.gov>.

/s/ **Osama El-Lissy**

Osama El-Lissy  
Deputy Administrator  
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment: Federal Order

## FEDERAL ORDER

### Potato wart (*Synchytrium endobioticum* (Schilb.) Percival)

DA-2015-01

Effective immediately, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is restricting the import of potatoes from Prince Edward Island in Canada to prevent the entry or introduction into the United States of the causative agent (*Synchytrium endobioticum*) of potato wart. *S. endobioticum* is a harmful plant pest that could spread via host commodities imported from foreign countries where this pest is currently present.

This Federal Order is issued in accordance with the regulatory authority provided by the Plant Protection Act of June 20, 2000, as amended, Section 412(a), 7 U.S.C. 7712(a). Under the Act, the Secretary may prohibit or restrict the importation, entry, exportation, or movement in interstate commerce of any plant, plant product, biological control organism, noxious weed, article, or means of conveyance, if the Secretary determines that the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the introduction into the United States or the dissemination of a plant pest or noxious weed within the United States.

Potato wart is a serious disease of cultivated potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) that is not known to be present in the United States. The fungus is classified as an Agricultural Select Agent as it is considered to be a serious threat to agriculture by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's APHIS. There are few effective measures to control the fungus. With a limited capacity for natural spread, potato wart can be introduced through infected seed potatoes and movement of infested soil, making effective control possible primarily by appropriate production and handling practices and by statutory measures.

Prince Edward Island in Canada is the only country and region where *S. endobioticum* is present that is approved to export potatoes to the United States. Potato wart was first reported on Prince Edward Island in 2000. In response, APHIS imposed restrictions on the movement of all potatoes from Prince Edward Island to the United States. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) implemented an operational plan that included three years of surveillance on all potato fields on Prince Edward Island and soil sampling and testing of all seed potato fields. APHIS removed the restrictions in April 2001. Subsequently, CFIA developed a Potato Wart Domestic Long Term Management Plan (PWDLTMP) that restricts movement of potatoes and soil from regulated fields. However, additional new positive fields continue to be detected on Prince Edward Island, including detections in 2004, 2007, 2012, 2013, and 2014.

CFIA currently restricts export of potatoes to the United States from areas regulated for potato wart. The Prince Edward Island provincial government, the potato industry and CFIA monitor for potato wart in non-regulated fields and in potatoes produced in these

fields as part of mandated requirements or through standard management practices. However, the new detections, including an August 2014 infestation that was not associated with previous detections, have raised concerns about the possibility of potato wart entering the United States via infected tubers or contaminated soil.

To prevent the introduction of *S. endobioticum* into the United States, APHIS will use the following interim measures for the importation of potatoes (*S. tuberosum*) to the United States that are grown in fields on Prince Edward Island that are not under regulatory control by CFIA:

- Tablestock potatoes must be washed or dry brushed, meet or exceed the requirements of the U.S. or Canadian No. 2 grade standard, be treated with a sprout inhibitor if more than 30 days post-harvest, and consumer packed in containers of 50 pounds (22.72 kg) or less. The potatoes must be subjected to an official phytosanitary inspection and be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate or other documentation as per the USDA Canadian Border Agricultural Clearance Manual. Such documentation must state that the potatoes originated from Prince Edward Island, were grown in a field where Potato Wart is not known to occur, and that they meet the requirements of Federal Order dated January 26, 2015.
- Bulk potatoes intended for processing or repacking must be washed and treated with a sprout inhibitor if more than 30 days post-harvest. The potatoes must be subjected to an official phytosanitary inspection and be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate or other documentation as noted for Tablestock above. Such documentation must indicate that the potatoes originated from Prince Edward Island, were grown in a field where Potato Wart is not known to occur, that they were washed, and that they meet the requirements of Federal Order dated January 26, 2015.
- Unwashed potatoes for processing or repacking or potatoes with excess residual soil after handling can only be imported if shipped to a facility that has entered into a compliance agreement with APHIS to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to properly dispose of culls, wash water, and soil. Potatoes intended for packing/repacking must be treated with a sprout inhibitor if more than 30 days post-harvest. An import permit is required. The potatoes must be accompanied by a Certificate of Origin that indicates that the potatoes originated on Prince Edward Island, were grown in a field where Potato Wart is not known to occur and that they meet the requirements of the Federal Order dated January 26, 2015. Facilities intending to enter into a compliance agreement with APHIS should contact the APHIS State Plant Health Director for the State where the facility is located.
- Seed potatoes must originate from a field that has been tested for and found free of *S. endobioticum* within one year of harvest of a potato crop with a minimum of 400 sampling points per hectare (160 points per acre), a minimum of 5,000 cc soil per hectare (2,000 cc per acre), and a maximum grid size of approximately 30

square meters (36 square yards). In addition, visual surveillance must be conducted during harvest or within the 10 day period after harvest. Since visual surveillance of seed potatoes that were harvested prior to the publication of this Federal Order was not conducted, such potatoes must be subjected to an official phytosanitary inspection and found free of potato wart prior to shipment. The shipment must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate with the following additional declaration:

- Fields used to produce the seed potatoes in this shipment were tested as per APHIS Federal Order dated January 26, 2015 and *Synchytrium endobioticum* was not detected. The potatoes were officially inspected by CFIA and found free of potato wart.

This action is necessary because the APHIS Administrator has determined that the introduction and establishment of *S. endobioticum* poses a serious threat to the agriculture of potatoes grown in the United States. These restrictions go into effect on January 26, 2015. For additional information regarding this Federal Order, call Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist William Aley at 301-851-2130 or write to him at <William.D.Aley@aphis.usda.gov>.