



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs
4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232 • Voice (301) 734-7799 • Web: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov>

Melissa O'Dell (301) 734-5222

Angela Harless (202) 720-4623

USDA PROPOSES TO ALLOW THE IMPORTATION OF ZAMBIAN BABY SQUASH AND BABY ZUCCHINI

WASHINGTON, May 15, 2008--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced a proposal to allow, under certain conditions, the importation of commercial shipments of baby squash and baby zucchini from Zambia into the United States.

As a condition of entry, both commodities would have to be produced in accordance with a systems approach--a set of plant health procedures intended to substantially reduce the risk of introducing foreign pests into the United States. The systems approach would require the squash and zucchini to be grown in APHIS-approved greenhouses designed to exclude all pests of quarantine significance, such as the pumpkin fly and American bollworm. The vegetables would also have to be protected by a pest-proof screen while in transit to a packinghouse designed to exclude all pests of concern and then packed in insect-proof cartons for shipment to the United States. In addition, the commodities would have to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate signed by the national plant protection organization of Zambia, stating that they were produced in accordance with the proposed requirements.

This action would allow the importation of baby squash and baby zucchini from Zambia into the United States while continuing to provide protection against the introduction of quarantine pests.

The proposed rule is scheduled for publication in the May 16 *Federal Register*.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before July 15. Send two copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. APHIS-2007-0144, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. If you wish to submit a comment using the Internet go to the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocketDetail&d=APHIS-2007-0144-1>; then click on "Add Comments." This will also allow you to view public comments and related materials available electronically.

Comments received are posted on the Regulations.gov Web site and also can be viewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. To facilitate entry into the comment reading room, please call (202) 690-2817.

Note to Reporters: USDA news releases, program announcements and media advisories are available on the Internet. Go to the APHIS news release page at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/newsroom>. Also, anyone with an e-mail address can sign up to receive APHIS press releases automatically. Send an e-mail message to lyris@mdrdlyriss10.aphis.usda.gov and leave the subject blank. In the message, type `subscribe press_releases`.