

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Special Procedures—Clearing Commercial Shipments of Mexican Avocados

Purpose	To reduce the risk of introducing avocado pests.
Limitations and Operational Issued	<p>Only commercial shipments from Mexico are eligible. Avocados may enter the United States only from October 15 through April 15 of the following year. The avocados must be grown in certified orchards in approved municipalities in the Mexican State of Michoacan. They must be shipped only from certified packing houses.</p> <p>Avocados may only be distributed to the following States: Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.</p>
Ports Approved for the Entry of Avocados	<p>The ports that are approved for entry will be specified on the permit. In general, these are as follows:</p> <p>TEXAS: Brownsville, Pharr, Laredo, Eagle Pass, El Paso</p> <p>ARIZONA: Nogales</p>
Directions for Clearing the Avocados	<p><u>Step 1—Check the paperwork:</u></p> <p>A.) Look for a Notice of Arrival. This form should include all pertinent information including the avocados final destination and whether transloading is necessary.</p> <p>B.) Make sure the importer has a specific avocado permit. This permit is valid for one shipping season. Review the permit for specific requirements concerning distribution and breaking of seals by PPQ at the in-bond destination.</p> <p>C.) Require a Mexican Phytosanitary Certificate. The certificate must carry and AD that, "All the conditions of 7CFR 319.56-2ff have been met."</p> <p><u>Step 2—Check itinerary and final destination:</u></p> <p>A.) Require all shipments to move under a U.S. Customs' bond to the approved destination. A consumption entry is unacceptable.</p> <p>B.) Make sure the avocados are moving to an approved State.</p> <p><u>Step 3—Inspect the avocados and the cartons they are contained in:</u></p> <p>A.) Examine the cartons. The avocados must be packed in clean, new boxes, or clean plastic reusable crates. The boxes or crates must be clearly marked with the identity of the grower, packinghouse, and exporter, and the statement, "Not for distribution in AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, FL, GA, HI, LA, MS, NV, NM, NC, OK, OR, SC, TN, TX, WA, Puerto Rico, and all other U.S. Territories." The cartons must also be marked with the grower, packing house, and shipper. If the marking is absent, refuse entry to the avocados.</p> <p>B.) Randomly select 30 boxes from each shipment (an inspectional unit). Take one avocado from each box and examine the stem end of the fruit for oviposition or infestation sites made by the stem weevil. Then, slice the avocado thinly across the stem end looking for this weevil. Finally, slice the remainder of the avocado looking for fruit fly larvae and signs of seed pests. Be alert for the following pests: The large avocado seed weevil (<i>Heilipus lauri</i>), the avocado seed moth (<i>Stenomoma catenifer</i>), the small avocado seed weevils (<i>Conotrachelus aguacatae</i> and <i>C. perseae</i>), and the avocado stem weevil (<i>Copturus aguacatae</i>).</p> <p>C.) If you intercept any of the listed pests or fruit flies, hold the shipment and immediately call Claudio Garcia at (818) 412-0390. Claudio is the Avocado Coordinator. If other pests of quarantine significance are intercepted, follow standard operating procedures.</p>

**Instructing
Affected Parties**

Instruct local U.S. Customs brokers and affected parties of the requirements for shipping Mexican avocados.

**Supervising
Transloading**

- A.) Make sure the avocados are transloaded into refrigerated trucks.
- B.) Supervise the transloading. Remain on the site for the duration of the transloading. Check periodically to make sure that the avocados are being stamped with an approved packing house registration sticker. Once the transloading is done, affix an APHIS seal to the container and continue with the transiting procedures that follow.

**Transiting
Procedures**

NOTE: Air shipments are prohibited from landing outside the approved States for further transit to approved areas.

- A.) Stamp the inbound paperwork, "Shipment Authorized to...(destination)."
- B.) Issue a limited permit (PPQ Form 530) and write the APHIS seal number on the permit.
- C.) Give the truck driver a transit map that includes the instructions for the authorized movement through transit corridors. Tell the driver that the APHIS seal must remain intact until a USDA inspector or their designee arrives to break the seal and release the avocados.
- D.) Ahead of the shipment, send a facsimile to the SPHD at the final destination. Include all pertinent documents with your FAX, making sure that the APHIS seal number is legible.

**Cooperating with
Other Agencies**

Fruit and Vegetable Division (F&V) of Agricultural Marketing Service is responsible for grading the avocados when they arrive either at the border or at the point of destination. If the avocados are graded at the border, coordinate with F&V and supervise the grading. If the F&V takes samples, make sure that they are returned to PPQ for destruction.