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About Plant Protection and Quarantine

Last Modified:

APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine program forms America's first line of defense against the introduction and spread of invasive pests. Our team of more than 3,000 employees has expertise in a wide range of fields, from botany and virology to data analysis, economics, and much more.

Throughout the United States and abroad, we safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources against the entry, establishment, and spread of economically and environmentally significant pests and facilitate the safe trade of agricultural products. We collaborate with many partners, cooperators, and stakeholders to carry out this mission. Below are two of our most crucial partnerships:

[Customs and Border Protection](#)

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's **Customs and Border Protection** enforces APHIS regulations at ports of entry. See our Memorandum of Agreement.

[Learn More](#)



[National Plant Board](#)

PPQ and the **National Plant Board** work together to use our respective Federal and State authorities, assets, and expertise to safeguard plant health and enable safe trade. The Strategic Alliance documents the nature of this relationship and our top priorities.

[Learn More](#)



Globally, PPQ represents the United States at the [International Plant Protection Convention](#), where we work with more than 180 other countries to develop science-based international standards. Through the [North American Plant Protection Organization](#), we also collaborate with Canada and Mexico to create regional standards that keep invasive plant pests out of North America.

Accomplishments

All along [the safeguarding continuum](#) (103.27 KB), PPQ experts assess risks associated with pests that hitchhike on and in the agricultural products we import. We take action at the right time and in the right place to safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources, while keeping international trade and travel moving. Take a look at [our work from 2022](#) (224.64 KB):

Globally

We fought pests offshore before they could reach the United States and helped U.S. agriculture thrive in the global marketplace.

- **Inspected and cleared 2.82 billion pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables from 19 countries** before they were shipped to the United States
- Oversaw a systems approach for the **safe import of 2.04 billion pounds of avocados from Mexico**
- **Processed 1.2 million [Lacey Act](#) declarations**, helping to combat illegal trade of protected plant species
- **Certified or recertified 282 treatment facilities**, including 72 facilities in Mexico, 6 facilities in Central America, 15 facilities in the Caribbean, 13 facilities in South America, and 2 facilities in Asia



At the Border

We kept potentially damaging plant pests out of the country.

- **Intercepted 1,702 quarantine pests** at plant inspection stations

- **Reduced inspection times on the southern border by 77 percent** by focusing on higher-risk shipment inspections, continuing to implement risk-based sampling at U.S. ports of entry
- **Identified 109,000 pests during U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspections** of cargo, mail, and express carrier shipments and took action to prevent them from entering the United States
- **Intercepted over 392,100 prohibited agricultural products and 603 quarantine pests** during baggage inspections of approximately 14 million passengers bound for the U.S. mainland from Hawaii and Puerto Rico



Nationally

We fought back against the spread of invasive plant pests that threatened our Nation's crops and forests.

- **Reared and released more than 515,891 stingless wasps** to State and Tribal cooperators for release in 28 States to combat the emerald ash borer

- **Treated 91,642 rangeland acres to control outbreaks of grasshopper and Mormon crickets**, protecting over 224,000 acres of land
- **Provided \$7.5 million for 28 clean plant projects**, which distribute disease-free fruits and vegetables to nurseries and growers
- **Seized 339,408 pounds of prohibited agricultural items valued at over \$2.1 million** through product recalls and express courier package inspections, helping to protect crops and livestock from pests and diseases



Program Reports

Learn more in our program reports:

- [The Lacey Act: Combating the Illegal Trade of Protected Plant Species](#) (197.35 KB)
- [Making Agricultural Trade Safe and Supporting U.S. Exports](#) (263.75 KB)

- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (216.82 KB)
- [Strengthening Pest Exclusion Abroad](#) (231.96 KB)
- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (216.82 KB)
- [Strengthening Pest Exclusion at the Border](#) (218.06 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Cotton Pests](#) (194.89 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Field Crop and Rangeland Ecosystem Pests](#) (230.64 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Specialty Crop Pests](#) (321.58 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Tree and Wood Pests](#) (209.91 KB)
- [Pest Detection](#) (213.75 KB)
- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (216.82 KB)

[PPQ Deputy Administrator's Safeguarding Award and Safe Trade Award](#)

The PPQ Deputy Administrator's Safeguarding Award and Safe Trade Award recognize outstanding initiatives and innovations that protect American agriculture and plant resources.

[Learn More](#)



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