

Breadcrumb

1. [Home](#)
2. Print
3. Pdf
4. Node
5. Entity Print

Insects and Mites FAQ's

Last Modified:

Q. Do I need a permit to move arthropod plant pests interstate even if they are established in the state where I plan to move them?

A. Yes. You need a PPQ 526 permit to move interstate ALL plant pests whether they occur in the destination state or not.

Q. What level of containment is necessary for the pest I plan to move?

A. This depends on the species and its intended use. Widely distributed insect and mite pests may require little or no containment. However, if you plan to import an exotic, field collected arthropod of pest status into an area in the U.S. in which it could easily establish, you may be required to import the organism into a high-security containment facility. Non-indigenous, lab reared organisms, pests of low establishment potential or low dispersal capability may require inspection of your facility by State and/or local officials. Other factors taken into consideration when evaluating level of containment include whether the agent is indigenous to the U.S. and to the area where you plan to contain the organism, host plant availability, size and mobility of organism, instar required, number of organisms shipped and whether you plan to maintain a colony or destroy upon arrival.

Q. Do I need a USDA permit to import dead arthropods?

A. USDA does not require permits for dead arthropods*. Under 7CFR 330.200, "biological specimens of plant pests, in preservation or dried, may be imported without further restriction under this part, but subject to inspection on arrival in the United States to confirm the nature of the material and freedom from risk of plant pest dissemination". Packages must not contain any plant material, soil, or other plant pests and are subject to inspection by Customs or USDA officials at the port of entry. In addition, the importer is responsible for complying with other Federal or State requirements (e.g. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.). Please note that a completed [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Form 3-177](#) should accompany shipments at the point of entry.

*Note: There is no permit required for dead bees either but there are some additional requirements as described starting in [7 CFR 322.28](#).

Q. Who should apply for the permit? The person who will send the organism or the person who will receive it?

A. In general, the receiver should apply for the permit since it is his or her responsibility to handle or contain the shipped organism.

Q: Do species of Drosophila need Federal import or interstate movement permits?

A. All shipments of Drosophila fruit flies into the United States (including Territories) from foreign sources must now be pre-authorized with a Plant Pest Permit (PPQ Form 526). Interstate shipments among States in continental North America (including Alaska) do not require Plant Pest Permits, but interstate shipments to and from Hawaii and the Territories do require permits. Although Drosophila fruit flies present minimal plant pest risk (e.g., feeding on overripe fruit in storage), shipments manifested as "fruit flies" have recently raised agricultural and environmental concerns because this common name also refers to notoriously significant plant

pests like the Mediterranean and oriental fruit flies. As a result, plant pest permits are now required so that shipments are appropriately routed to PPQ inspection stations for confirmation of the identities of the enclosed organisms. Permits and the appropriate use of shipping labels will facilitate movement through Customs and Border Protection inspection processes with minimal delays in PPQ inspection stations.

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