

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2022-14
April 1, 2022

Subject: APHIS amends entry requirements for importation of potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) from Prince Edward Island, Canada to prevent introduction of potato wart pathogen *Synchytrium endobioticum*

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective immediately, the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending its requirements for the importation of potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) from Prince Edward Island (PEI), Canada to prevent the introduction of potato wart (causal agent *Synchytrium endobioticum*) into the United States.

Synchytrium endobioticum (*S. endobioticum*) is regulated by APHIS as a Select Agent. Potato wart is known to affect only the domestic potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and two wild potato species (*Solanum* spp.). The fungus overwinters in the soil as spores and may remain viable for 40 years or more in the absence of a host plant. The spores can survive a wide range of environmental conditions, including conditions in storage and transport. A low level of resting spores in tubers or soil is sufficient for the spread of the pathogen. The movement of infected potato tubers and contaminated soil are documented as important pathways for the introduction of *S. endobioticum* to new areas. There are no treatments available to control potato wart.

Prior to the issuance of Federal Order DA-2022-14, APHIS regulated the importation of potatoes from Canada according to the requirements of Federal Order DA-2015-01 issued on January 26, 2015. That order allowed the importation of table stock, bulk, unwashed, and seed potatoes from PEI with a phytosanitary certificate and under specified conditions.

Potato wart was first reported in a processing potato field in PEI in 2000. Since the initial detection 21 years ago, *S. endobioticum* had been detected in PEI in a total of 34 fields. In 2021, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reported two new potato wart infestations, which resulted in Canada's issuance of a Ministerial Order that suspended the certification of potato exports from PEI to the United States. Canada has requested that APHIS allow the resumption of potato imports under new conditions given the latest detections, and subsequent confirmatory analysis in February 2022.

To prevent the introduction of *S. endobioticum* into the United States, APHIS is replacing Federal Order DA-2015-01 with Federal Order DA-2022-14. The Federal Order DA-2022-14 prohibits the importation of field-grown seed potatoes from PEI into the United States and allows the importation of potatoes for consumption that meet the specified conditions, as well as all other applicable USDA regulations.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Narasimha Chary Samboju at 301-851-2038 or narasimha.c.samboju@usda.gov.

/s/

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Attachment: Federal Order

**United States Department of Agriculture
Animal Plant Health Inspection Service
Plant Protection and Quarantine**

Federal Order

APHIS amends import requirements of potatoes from Prince Edward Island, Canada to prevent the introduction of *Synchytrium endobioticum*, the causal agent of potato wart

DA-2022-14
April 1, 2022

Effective immediately, the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending the importation requirements for potatoes from Prince Edward Island (PEI) in Canada to prevent the introduction of potato wart (fungal causal agent *Synchytrium endobioticum*) into the United States. *Synchytrium endobioticum* is a harmful pest that could spread via potato commodities imported from foreign countries where this pest is currently present.

Synchytrium endobioticum (*S. endobioticum*) is regulated by APHIS as a Select Agent. Potato wart is known to naturally infect the domestic potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) and two wild potato species (*Solanum* spp.). There are no chemical or non-chemical treatments available to control potato wart. Potato wart was first reported in a processing potato field in PEI in 2000. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) established a quarantine of the infested field (index field) and identified the associated fields (adjacent, primary contact, and other contact fields) based on proximity to the index field, shared equipment, and soil and/or potato tubers. Since the initial detection 21 years ago, *S. endobioticum* has been detected in several locations in PEI. Most recently, in 2021, two additional fields were found infested. In 2022, subsequent investigative analysis of soil samples from the 2021 detections identified one additional field infested with potato wart.

This Federal Order replaces DA-2015-01 issued on January 26, 2015, and updates import requirements for potatoes for consumption and planting from PEI into the United States, including all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

To prevent the introduction of *S. endobioticum* into the United States, APHIS will only allow the importation of potatoes from PEI into the United States subject to the following requirements:

- 1) Potatoes from PEI for consumption may only be imported subject to the following requirements:
 - a) Potatoes must not originate from any fields restricted by CFIA as index fields, adjacent fields, primary contact fields, and other contact fields for *S. endobioticum* as defined in Canada's Potato Wart Domestic Long-Term Management Plan (CFIA, 2009).
 - b) Certified seed potatoes which were planted to produce potatoes for consumption must not originate from fields CFIA restricted for potato wart as index fields, adjacent fields, primary contact fields, and other contact fields for *S. endobioticum*.

- c) Potatoes must meet the requirements of the U.S. No. 1 grade standard¹.
 - d) Potatoes must be free of soil upon inspection at the port of entry. The potatoes must be washed with a forced stream of water to eliminate adhering soil, including caked dirt. Other methods such as brushing and rinsing may be required, in addition to washing with a forced stream of water to ensure the potatoes are free of soil.
 - e) Potatoes must be treated with a sprout inhibitor that is registered with the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency.
 - f) Consignments must be accompanied by a statement on the export documentation detailing the treatment including the date of sprout inhibitor application and product used.
 - g) All potato shipments must have traceability from production site to packing and export to allow a full trace-back and recall.
 - h) Potatoes for consumption must be officially inspected for pest freedom prior to export. This inspection should take place after the potatoes are washed. Any suspect infected potatoes should be reported to CFIA.
 - i) Each consignment must be inspected and accompanied by a certificate issued by CFIA and approved by APHIS stating that potatoes for consumption are free of quarantine pests for the United States. The certificate must include an Additional Declaration that states: “The potatoes in this shipment were grown in a field where potato wart is not known to occur and meet all requirements from the USDA Federal Order DA-2022-14 dated April 1, 2022.”
 - j) Each consignment is subject to inspection at the port of entry into the United States.
- 2) Seed potatoes for planting are prohibited entry into the United States.
- 3) In vitro plantlets, micro-tubers and mini-tubers for planting are allowed entry but require a permit.

This action is necessary because APHIS has determined that the entry and establishment of *S. endobioticum* poses a serious threat to agriculture in the United States. 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 of a plant pest into the United States or the dissemination of a plant pest or noxious weed within the United States. The regulatory authority provided by 7 U.S.C. 7754 allows the Secretary to issue orders to carry out this provision of the Plant Protection Act. For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Narasimha Chary Samboju at 301-851-2038 or narasimha.c.samboju@usda.gov.

¹ U.S. No. 1 grade standard of potatoes must meet the following requirements: similar varietal characteristics (except when designated as a mixed or specialty pack); firm; fairly clean; fairly well shaped; free from freezing, blackheart, late blight, southern bacterial wilt, ring rot, soft rot, and wet breakdown; free from serious damage by any other cause; and not less than 1.875 inches in diameter.