



Questions and Answers

Federal Order for Mediterranean Fruit Fly (*Ceratitis capitata*) Host Material from the Dominican Republic

What is medfly?

Mediterranean fruit fly (medfly) is one of the world's most destructive agricultural pests. It originated in Africa and has since spread throughout the Mediterranean region, southern Europe, the Middle East, Western Australia, South and Central America, and Hawaii. It was recently detected in the Caribbean. In general, it is found in most tropical and subtropical areas of the world. Medfly poses a serious threat to U.S. agriculture, particularly in the southern region of the country. If medfly were to become established in the United States, it could cause millions of dollars in damage, expensive eradication efforts, lost trade revenue, and higher food prices. For more information about medfly, please visit www.hungrypests.com.

Why is the United States restricting commercial and non-commercial shipments of certain fruits and vegetables from the Dominican Republic?

On March 13, 2015, the National Plant Protection Organization of the Dominican Republic notified the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of confirmed medfly captures in the Punta Cana area. To prevent the spread of medfly to the United States, APHIS issued a Federal Order to immediately suspend commercial shipments of fruit fly host materials and to prohibit the movement of those same items in passenger baggage.

What commodities are affected by this Federal Order?

- avocado (other than Hass)
- clementine
- grape
- grapefruit
- lemon
- litchi
- longan
- mamey (sapote)
- mandarin
- mango
- orange
- papaya
- pepper
- pummelo
- tangelo
- tangerine
- tomato (pink or red)
- tuna (cactus fruit)

Why are these commodities prohibited from entering the United States at this time?

The above-listed commodities are known to be medfly hosts and APHIS considers them to be a high risk for introducing medfly into the United States. APHIS is helping the Dominican Republic Agriculture Ministry to establish a trapping network that will allow them to determine how widespread medfly is in the Dominican Republic. Once the Ministry and APHIS are confident of the boundaries of the outbreak, APHIS will evaluate alternatives that may alleviate some or all of these restrictions.

Why are Hass avocados allowed to enter the United States and not the larger varieties which are prevalent in the Dominican Republic?

“Hass” avocados (see figure 1 below) are not considered a fruit fly host. Based on a review of research, APHIS has determined that Hass avocados are conditional non-hosts to medfly, *Ceratitis capitata*, and the *Anastrepha* spp. The conditions for non-host Hass avocados include the requirement that the Hass avocados be commercially produced and safeguarded after harvest from fruit flies prior to export. The larger green smooth skinned varieties (see figure 2 below), including but not limited to Pinkerton, Miguel, Bacon, Lula, Russell, Zutano and Choquette, are considered medfly hosts based on scientific literature and pest interceptions.



Figure 1: Hass avocado

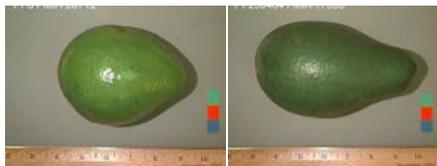


Figure 2: Larger varieties of avocado include Pinkerton, Miguel, Bacon, Lula, Russell, Zutano and Choquette.

Are mangoes that undergo hot water treatment affected by this action?

Commercial shipments of mangoes from the Dominican Republic will continue to be enterable under the conditions of the APHIS hot water treatment preclearance program.

Why are green tomatoes allowed to enter the United States and not pink or red tomatoes?

APHIS does not consider green tomatoes a medfly host based on scientific literature and pest interceptions. To be considered a green tomato, the surface of the fruit must be less than 30 percent pink or red at the time of harvest.

Can I send in-transit shipments of fruits and vegetables affected by this Federal Order to Canada?

Prohibited products from the Dominican Republic are allowed overland transit movement as long they enter through U.S. ports north of the 39° latitude. This includes airports and seaports north of (and including) the Port of Baltimore, Maryland. Shipments of prohibited products sent to Canada will NOT be allowed to move back into the United States.

How do I apply for an in-transit permit?

An overview of the PPQ transit permit application process is available on the APHIS Web site [Transit Permit Information](#). To apply for an in-transit permit, please use [PPQ Form 586](#).

How long will this Federal Order be in place?

APHIS, in conjunction with the Dominican Republic Agriculture Ministry, is assessing the medfly outbreak in the Dominican Republic to determine further actions.

Where I can a get the latest information regarding the Dominican Republic medfly outbreak?

For updates on this situation, please subscribe to the [PPQ Stakeholder Registry](#) and select the PPQ - Fruits and Vegetables Imports topic.