

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION

DA-2017-34

October 23, 2017

Subject: APHIS Amends Requirements for Fresh Blueberry Fruit (*Vaccinium* spp.) Imported from Chile into the United States

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective immediately, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending the entry requirements for the importation of fresh blueberry fruit (*Vaccinium* spp.) from Chile into the United States. After an operational evaluation, APHIS adds Savannah, Georgia, as an approved port of arrival through which fresh blueberry consignments from Chile may be imported while meeting phytosanitary safeguards and requirements. All other requirements in the January 27, 2014 (DA-2014-07), version of the Federal Order remain unchanged.

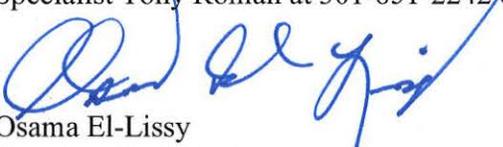
To prevent the introduction of European grapevine moth (*Lobesia botrana* or EGVM) into the United States, APHIS requires blueberry shipments from regions VI, VII, and VIII destined to the United States to be fumigated with methyl bromide at the point of origin or at the first U.S. port of arrival under 7 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 305. In addition, consignments from regions in Chile other than VI, VII, and VIII, that do not require fumigation, are subject to an increased rate of preclearance inspection through the APHIS preclearance program at the port of export.

Chilean blueberries are allowed to be fumigated upon arrival at the following maritime ports of entry:

- Long Beach and Los Angeles, California;
- Wilmington, Delaware;
- Miami and Port Everglades, Florida;
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (to include ports in the New York City metropolitan area);
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania;
- Pharr-McAllen, Texas; and
- Savannah, Georgia.

Fumigation schedules are either the 2lb rate (at 60° or 70° F), in accordance with the methyl bromide label, or the 4lb rate (at 40° F). Due to the high EGVM population in Chile during recent seasons and the unexpected detection of the moth on fresh blueberries, APHIS has determined that these additional requirements are necessary to prevent the entry of EGVM into the United States.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Tony Román at 301-851-2242 or at Juan.A.Roman@aphis.usda.gov.



Osama El-Lissy
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment: Federal Order

FEDERAL ORDER

Importation of Blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.) from Chile

DA-2017-34

October 23, 2017

This Federal Order is issued pursuant to the authority provided by the Plant Protection Act (PPA) of June 20, 2000, as amended, Section 412(a), 7 U.S.C. 7712(a), which authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to 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 into the United States or the dissemination of a plant pest or noxious weed within the United States.

This Federal Order (FO) amends and replaces a previous FO (DA-2014-07), issued by APHIS on January 27, 2014 that required fresh blueberry consignments from regions VI, VII, and VIII in Chile and destined for the United States be fumigated with methyl bromide (MB) at the point of origin or at the first port of arrival of:

- Long Beach and Los Angeles, California;
- Wilmington, Delaware;
- Miami and Port Everglades, Florida;
- Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (to include ports in the New York City metropolitan area);
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; or
- Pharr-McAllen, Texas.

This Federal Order adds Savannah, Georgia, as an approved port of arrival through which fresh blueberry consignments from these regions of Chile can enter and be fumigated. APHIS has evaluated the ability of the Savannah port of entry to administer MB fumigation in accordance with the requirements of this Federal Order, as well as in accordance with 7 *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* Part 305 (APHIS treatment regulations). This fumigation requirement is necessary to prevent the introduction into the United States of the harmful plant pest, European grapevine moth (*Lobesia botrana*) through fresh blueberry fruit consignments from Chile.

APHIS still considers that fresh blueberry consignments destined for the United States from Chile pose a significant phytosanitary risk to the U.S. domestic grape industry, in part, due to the

large populations of European grapevine moth (EGVM) in Chile's production areas in regions VI, VII, and VIII.

APHIS requires fresh blueberry maritime consignments from the above-mentioned regions to be fumigated with MB at the port of origin or at the maritime port of entry. Fumigation treatments allowed at the maritime port of entry are a treatment rate of 2lb/1000 cubic feet for 3 1/2 hours at 70° F or above for tarpaulin fumigations, or, 60° F or above for chamber fumigation at normal atmospheric pressure; or, 4lb/1000 cubic feet for 3 hours at 40° F.

EGVM was detected in Chile in April of 2008 on grapes. This pest, a European tortricid, attacks primarily grape flowers and fruit, however it is polyphagous and appears to affect other commodities as well. Damage caused by the pest can be extensive; some growers reported losses of 70 percent of their grape crops in 2008.

Fresh blueberries have been allowed into the United States from Chile since 1983. Consignments may or may not be pre-cleared. Currently, most consignments are inspected at the port of export, with APHIS - SAG supervision, under a pre-clearance agreement between Chile and the United States. Until the December 2012 detections, blueberry was not considered a host of EGVM. With these detections and the current high numbers of EGVM trapped in regions VI, VII and VIII, APHIS now considers fresh blueberry fruit to be a host of EGVM.

Apart from the addition of the port of Savannah, Georgia, as an approved port for blueberries from regions VI, VII, or VIII, all other requirements of the January 27, 2014, Federal Order remain in effect. Accordingly, all fresh blueberry consignments from Chile must be:

- Subjected to an increased preclearance inspection rate under the pre-clearance program at the port of export for consignments originating in regions other than VI, VII, or VIII; or
- If the consignments originate from regions VI, VII, and VIII, then per 7 CFR 305 they must be fumigated with methyl bromide (MB) in Chile or upon arrival at one of the following ports of entry:
 - Long Beach and Los Angeles, California;
 - Wilmington, Delaware;
 - Miami and Port Everglades, Florida;
 - Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (to include ports in the New York City metropolitan area);
 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania;
 - Pharr-McAllen, Texas; and
 - Savannah, Georgia

This action is necessary because the APHIS Administrator has determined that the introduction and establishment of EGVM poses a serious threat to agriculture including certain fruits or vegetables grown in the United States. These restrictions to prevent the introduction and establishment of EGVM are immediately needed and warranted to address plant pest risks associated with currently admissible fresh blueberry fruit. These restrictions are in effect until further notice; however, after each Chilean shipping season ends, APHIS will re-assess and reconsider the entry conditions for subsequent seasons.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Tony Román at 301-851-2242 or at Juan.A.Roman@aphis.usda.gov.