

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION  
DA-2017-35  
October 23, 2017

SUBJECT: APHIS Restricts the Importation of Peanut from Argentina and Brazil due to Peanut Smut (*Thecaphora frezii*)

TO: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective immediately, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will restrict the importation of peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea* L.) for consumption and purposes other than planting from Argentina and Brazil into the United States. APHIS is taking this action in response to a high infection rate of peanut smut (*Thecaphora frezii*) in commercial peanut production areas in Argentina and its presence in wild peanut in Brazil without official control measures. APHIS currently prohibits the importation of peanuts for planting from Argentina and Brazil due to concerns associated with peanut smut. This Federal Order prohibits the importation of raw peanuts from Argentina and Brazil in their entirety and requires the following:

- Peanuts from Argentina and Brazil must be commercially blanched with shells and “red skins” completely removed,
- Each consignment must be identified on shipping documents as blanched, and
- Each consignment must be accompanied by a producer’s or processor’s statement indicating: “The peanuts in this consignment have been blanched as indicated in the APHIS Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual, with shells and ‘red skins’ completely removed.”

APHIS determined that the commercial blanching process indicated in the APHIS Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual (a blanching process that reaches at least 84 degrees Celsius for at least 12 minutes during blanching) sufficiently safeguards against peanut smut. Processed peanuts (such as roasted, or ground into peanut butter) are still admissible under current regulations.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist George Balady at 301-851-2240 or via email at [George.A.Balady@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:George.A.Balady@aphis.usda.gov).



Osama El-Lissy  
Deputy Administrator  
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachments: Federal Order

## FEDERAL ORDER

### Importation of Peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*) from Argentina and Brazil

DA-2017-35  
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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). The Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit or restrict the movement in interstate commerce of any plant, plant part, or article, if the Secretary determines the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the dissemination of a plant pest within the United States.

Effective immediately, this Federal Order prohibits the importation of raw peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea* L.) from Argentina and Brazil to prevent the introduction and establishment of *Thecaphora frezii*, the causal agent of peanut smut, into the United States. This Federal Order requires that:

- Peanuts from Argentina and Brazil for purposes other than propagation must be commercially blanched with shells and “red skins” completely removed,
- Each consignment must be identified on shipping documents as blanched, and
- Each consignment must be accompanied by a producer’s or processor’s statement indicating: “The peanuts in this consignment have been commercially blanched as indicated in the APHIS Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual, with shells and ‘red skins’ completely removed.”

Peanut smut was first reported in wild peanut in Brazil in 1962, and in commercial peanut production in Argentina in 1995. However, in the last decade, the prevalence of the disease in Argentina, in particular, increased significantly. Currently, the prevalence rate of peanut smut in growing regions in Argentina is 100 percent, with yield losses of 50 percent or more at some production sites. The disease persists in wild peanuts in Brazil without official control.

APHIS determined that the introduction and establishment of peanut smut is a serious threat to U.S. peanut production. Due to the presence of peanut smut in Argentina and Brazil, APHIS prohibits the importation of raw peanuts from Argentina and Brazil.

APHIS determined that commercial blanching of peanuts that reaches at least 84 degrees Celsius for at least 12 minutes during blanching reaches a temperature and exposure time sufficient to devitalize the teliospores associated with peanut smut. APHIS updated the Miscellaneous and Processed Products Manual to add this process. Accordingly, peanuts that have been commercially blanched with shells and “red skins” completely removed may be imported into the United States, if each consignment is identified on shipping documents as commercially blanched, and if each consignment is accompanied by a producer’s or processor’s statement indicating that: “The peanuts in this consignment have been commercially blanched as indicated in the APHIS Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual, with shells and ‘red skins’

completely removed.” Processed peanuts (such as roasted, or ground into peanut butter) are still admissible under current regulations.

As a result of this Federal Order, APHIS updated agency guidance in both the Seeds Not for Planting Manual, the Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual, and the Fruit and Vegetable Import Requirements database. If APHIS revises the Miscellaneous and Processed Product Manual to indicate additional blanching processes that devitalize peanut smut, or this blanching process, APHIS will communicate this change via State Plant Regulatory Official letter and Stakeholder Registry notice.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist George Balady at 301-851-2240 or at [George.A.Balady@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:George.A.Balady@aphis.usda.gov).