

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2021-18
August 17, 2021

Subject: APHIS Amends Import Requirements for Fresh Fig Fruit from Mexico

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective August 24, 2021, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is implementing restrictions on all commercial consignments of fresh fig fruits (*Ficus carica*) imported into the United States from Mexico to prevent the introduction of black fig fly (BFF) (*Silba adipata* McAlpine) into the United States. APHIS is taking this action in response to BFF detections in figs in the Mexican states of Baja California Sur, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, and Puebla.

Prior to the effective date of this order, fresh fig fruit from Mexico can enter the United States as commercial consignments under certain pest mitigation strategies. However, APHIS is amending the import requirements for all figs from Mexico as a pest risk mitigation measure for BFF. APHIS will require fresh figs fruit from all growing areas of Mexico to be irradiated at 400 Gy, which is an APHIS approved treatment. Fresh fig consignments may be irradiated as part of an APHIS pre-clearance program or irradiated upon-arrival in the United States at an APHIS-approved irradiation facility. Irradiation in the United States requires a compliance agreement. APHIS will continue to prohibit fresh fig fruit brought in non-commercial consignments. This includes passenger bags, personal vehicles, directly through the mail, and direct express carrier shipments.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Marc Phillips at 301-851-2114 or Marc.Phillips@usda.gov.



Dr. Osama El-Lissy
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment: Federal Order

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

Federal Order

Import Restrictions on Fig Fruit from Mexico

DA-2021-18
August 17, 2021

Effective August 24, 2021, this federal order revises import requirements for fresh fig fruit (*Ficus carica* L.) imported from Mexico to prevent the introduction of black fig fly (BFF) (*Silba adipata* McAlpine) by imposing treatment requirements on all fresh figs from Mexico.

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. 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. This Federal Order is also issued pursuant to the regulations promulgated under the Plant Protection Act and found in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at Title 7 CFR Part 319.

APHIS has determined that the introduction and establishment of BFF poses a serious threat to U.S. agriculture including fresh fig fruits grown in the United States. APHIS has determined that additional import requirements for fresh fig fruit from Mexico are necessary to prevent the introduction and establishment of BFF in the United States. These restrictions are immediately needed and warranted to address plant pest risks associated with the importation of fresh figs from Mexico.

In March 2020, the Mexican government notified APHIS of BFF detections in the state of Morelos. On July 30, 2021, Mexico notified APHIS that BFF had been found in the states of Baja California Sur, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, and Puebla, Mexico. Mexico also notified APHIS that BFF was not under official control. BFF is a lance fly species (Lonchaeidae) which attacks only figs but is considered one of the most important and destructive pests of figs. BFF is distributed throughout the Mediterranean region and the Middle East and has been introduced to South Africa. BFF has limited distribution in the United States. APHIS has determined that this species would be able to establish in fig growing areas of the United States.

Prior to the effective date of this order, commercial shipments of fresh fig fruit from Mexico were enterable into the continental United States with irradiation at 400 Gy if produced in a BFF infested area (Morelos), 150 Gy for fruit produced in a Tephritidae fruit fly infested area where

BFF is not present, or with a phytosanitary certificate with an additional declaration that they were produced in a pest free area for fruit flies.

New Requirements for Fresh Fig Fruit as of the effective date of this order:

To prevent the introduction of BFF into the United States via fresh fig fruit:

- Only commercial consignments of fresh fig fruit may be imported from Mexico.
- Consignments of fresh fig fruit from Mexico will require mandatory irradiation treatment at 400 Gy, in accordance with Title 7 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 305.
- Irradiation treatment can occur in Mexico under an APHIS preclearance program, or upon-arrival in the United States at an APHIS-approved irradiation facility under a compliance agreement.

All other shipments of fresh fig fruit from Mexico, including passenger baggage, conveyances, express couriers, or any other means are prohibited.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Marc Phillips at 301-851-2114 or Marc.Phillips@usda.gov.