

**USDA-APHIS-PPQ  
Potentially Actionable Suspect Sample Policy:  
Citrus Greening, also known as Huanglongbing (HLB)**

**Overview**

A Potentially Actionable Suspect Sample (PASS) is a **regulatory sample** that presumptively contains a plant pest or pathogen of federal regulatory concern. The sample may contain fungi, bacteria, viruses, nematodes, weeds, insects, mites, mollusks, etc., and requires confirmation by a lab with **federal confirmatory authority**. A PASS is a regulatory sample where a preliminary diagnostic test result indicates the pathogen is present. A PASS requires confirmation by the USDA APHIS PPQ CPHST-Beltsville laboratory or in certain circumstances from a **regulated area**, by an APHIS National Plant Pathogen Laboratory Accreditation Program (NPPLAP) **accredited lab**.

**Samples Collected from a Non-Regulated Area**

Any regulatory **sample** collected from a non-regulated area that tests positive for citrus greening is considered a PASS and must be forwarded to the USDA APHIS PPQ CPHST-Beltsville laboratory for **final determination**.

**Samples Collected from a Regulated Area**

For a regulatory sample collected in a regulated area, the sample must be forwarded to an APHIS laboratory listed in Table 1 under the following conditions:

- The sample is an **unusual detection**
- The sample will result in the expansion of a previously established regulated area

A NPPLAP **certified analyst** at a NPPLAP accredited laboratory in a regulated area has the federal confirmatory authority to make the final determination on a regulatory sample in an area previously **confirmed positive** by APHIS if: 1) The laboratory notifies the APHIS national or regional program manager of the positive within 24 hours of the diagnostic result; and, 2) APHIS and the state are in concurrence on the list of previously positive regulated areas within the state.

**Table 1 APHIS Laboratories\***

CPHST Beltsville Lab	Western Region Lab	Eastern Region Lab
Dr. Mark Nakhla USDA APHIS PPQ BLDG 580, BARC-East Powder Mill Road Beltsville, MD 20705 <a href="mailto:APHIS-PPQCPHSTBeltsvilleSampleDiagnostics@we.aphis.gov">APHIS-PPQCPHSTBeltsvilleSampleDiagnostics@we.aphis.gov</a> Phone: (301) 504-7100, VOIP: (301) 313-9200	Dr. Craig Webb USDA APHIS PPQ Kansas State University 4024 Throckmorton Plant Sciences Center Manhattan, KS 66506 <a href="mailto:Craig.a.webb@aphis.usda.gov">Craig.a.webb@aphis.usda.gov</a> Phone: (785) 532-1349	Grace O'Keefe USDA APHIS PPQ Pennsylvania State University 105 Buckhout Lab University Park, PA 16802 <a href="mailto:Grace.okeefe@aphis.usda.gov">Grace.okeefe@aphis.usda.gov</a> Phone: (814) 865-9896

\*Notify APHIS laboratories prior to shipping samples.

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**Definitions**

**Certified Analyst:** A diagnostician, in a NPPLAP accredited laboratory, who satisfactorily completes yearly proficiency testing for citrus greening.

**Confirmed Positive:** The presence of the pathogen is confirmed in a diagnostic test conducted by a laboratory with federal confirmatory authority by utilizing the current APHIS citrus greening diagnostic detection work instructions. This final determination of a positive sample allows for federal regulatory action.

**Federal Confirmatory Authority:** For citrus greening, NPPLAP certified analysts utilizing the APHIS citrus greening work instructions have the authority to confirm a regulatory sample positive for federal regulatory action. NPPLAP certified analysts at accredited labs in the regulated states utilizing the APHIS citrus greening work instructions have the authority to make final determinations within regulated areas.

**Final Determination:** The final diagnostic result for a regulatory sample indicating whether the pathogen is present or not. The test is conducted by labs with federal confirmatory authority. If the sample is confirmed positive, regulatory action may commence.

**NPPLAP Accredited Lab:** A laboratory recognized by APHIS through the National Plant Pathogen Laboratory Accreditation Program as possessing all the necessary equipment and personnel to perform APHIS citrus greening diagnostic detection work instructions.

**Regulated Area:** Any APHIS recognized area where citrus greening has been federally confirmed.

**Regulatory Sample:** This is a sample of regulatory concern to APHIS for citrus greening collected by regulatory officials.

**Sample:** A sample refers to a single bag of leaves or a twig with attached leaves. Each sample is to contain a minimum of 5 symptomatic (unhealthy) leaves; 5-12 leaves if possible. It is strongly encouraged that each sample is from one plant. Regulatory action may commence on one sample confirmed positive.

**Unusual Detection:** A detection involving unique or unexpected circumstances, an atypical biology of the pest or pathogen, or a previously unknown host.