



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

Washington, DC  
20250

To Whom It May Concern:

Subject: Federal regulations for interstate movement of Christmas trees and wreaths

As an Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the mission of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's Plant Protection and Quarantine program is to safeguard the United States against the entry or movement of pests that can harm agriculture or natural resources. Because of the growing trend to market live Christmas trees and wreaths on the Internet, I would like to take this opportunity to make you aware of our regulations regarding the interstate movement of Christmas trees and wreaths. I am providing you with the information that will help you comply with these regulations, ensure that your product can move without impediment, and help us prevent the movement of pests that, if allowed to spread, could affect everyone's enjoyment of our precious trees—whether they are for celebrating a holiday tradition, creating a natural landscape in urban areas, or flourishing in wild forests. Let's work together to protect our natural resources and environment.

Movement of Christmas trees and wreaths, among other articles, is federally regulated in certain areas of the country to prevent the spread of damaging forest pests such as gypsy moth, pine shoot beetle, as well as the sudden oak death pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, which can spread by moving a number of decorative wood products. APHIS regulations, as well as some State regulations, require that certain conditions be met for Christmas trees and wreaths to move out of a quarantine area. APHIS and State regulatory personnel routinely work with Christmas tree farms and other holiday greenery establishments in quarantine areas to make sure companies are aware of and follow the regulations. However, there may be farms or other entities that we may not be aware of or that may not be in compliance with the regulations.

To ensure that those you represent are in compliance, I suggest that they take the following steps. Further information on the following is available at [www.aphis.usda.gov/HolidayGreeneryPests](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/HolidayGreeneryPests).

1. Check the online maps to find out if the supplying nursery is in a Federal quarantine area.
2. Call the respective APHIS State Plant Health Director's office to learn what documentation and/or inspection is required for the supplier to move Christmas trees and wreaths from the quarantine area.
3. Contact the supplier to ensure the company has a compliance agreement with APHIS and is meeting the requirements for moving Christmas trees and wreaths interstate.

I am asking that you educate your members about the APHIS regulations regarding



Safeguarding American Agriculture

APHIS is an agency of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs  
An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Federal Relay Service  
(Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)  
1-800-877-8339

Christmas tree and wreath movement. If a Christmas tree or wreath shipment does not have the correct documentation or is moving under conditions other than those stated in the regulations, the shipment may be delayed or stopped and fines may be assessed.

We need your help to protect our environment and natural resources from the spread of these harmful pests. Your assistance is vital and much appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Bech". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Rebecca Bech  
Deputy Administrator  
Plant Protection and Quarantine

edp/mlo/js