FOR INFORMATION
DA-2016-27

MAY 05 2016

Subject: APHIS Restricts the Entry of Mediterranean Fruit Fly (*Ceratitis capitata*) Host Commodities Imported from Aruba into the United States

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Effective immediately, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is implementing restrictions for the importation of Mediterranean fruit fly (medfly) host commodities from Aruba into the United States. Specifically, APHIS is issuing a Federal Order to restrict imports of tomatoes from Aruba. APHIS is taking this action in response to confirmed detections of medfly in Aruba.

Prior to the detection of medfly, tomatoes of any color were enterable into certain parts of the United States with a permit, inspection at the first port of entry, and compliance with the general requirements of 7 CFR 319.56-3. Aruba has not exported commercial volumes of tomatoes to the United States in the last five years; therefore, we do not anticipate the impact on trade from this action to be significant. To prevent the introduction of medfly into the United States, APHIS has determined additional entry requirements are necessary.

APHIS is only suspending imports of red and pink tomatoes. APHIS does not consider green tomatoes a medfly host as long as the surface of the fruit does not exceed more than 30 percent of pink and/or red at the time of harvesting. Therefore, APHIS can permit commercial shipments of green tomatoes subject to inspection at the port of entry and all general requirements of 7 CFR 319.56-3. In addition, APHIS is requiring the Aruba National Plant Protection Organization certify that the tomatoes are harvested green, through the issuance of a phytosanitary certificate, to be enterable into the United States.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Dorothy C. Wayson at 301 851-2036, or at Dorothy.C.Wayson@aphis.usda.gov

Osama El Lissy
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

FEDERAL ORDER

MAY 05 2016

Restrict Mediterranean Fruit Fly (*Ceratitis capitata*) Host Material from Aruba

This Federal Order immediately restricts imports of Mediterranean fruit fly (medfly) fruit and vegetable hosts (pink and red tomatoes) from Aruba.

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. This Federal Order is also issued pursuant to the regulations promulgated under the Plant Protection Act and found in the *Code of Federal Regulations* at 7 CFR 301.53.

The purpose of this Federal Order is to prevent the entry or introduction of the harmful plant pest, *Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann) (Mediterranean fruit fly or medfly), from Aruba into the United States. In March 2016, APHIS confirmed the identity of pest samples provided by the Aruba Department of Agriculture, Husbandry, and Fisheries as medfly. The samples were recovered from fruit fly traps in Aruba. The APHIS Administrator has determined that the introduction and establishment of medfly poses a serious threat to United States agriculture including certain fruits or vegetables grown in the United States. Due to the presence of medfly, APHIS has decided to suspend the importation of all host commodities, without treatment, from Aruba.

Effective immediately, APHIS is suspending imports of all untreated host commodities, specifically pink and red tomatoes, from Aruba, due to the presence of medfly. Prior to the detection of medfly, tomatoes were permitted from Aruba to certain areas of the United States without treatment or certification, regardless of color. APHIS does not consider green tomatoes a medfly host as long as the surface of the fruit does not exceed more than 30 percent of pink and/or red at the time of harvesting. Consignments of green tomatoes remain enterable into the approved U.S. ports of entry from Aruba subject to the general requirements of 7 CFR 319.56-3 and must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by National Plant Protection Organization in Aruba with an additional declaration stating the tomatoes were harvested green. These prohibitions also apply to all importation and in bond movement, including commercial and non-commercial cargo, passenger baggage, international mail, and express courier shipments.

These restrictions are necessary to prevent the introduction and establishment of medfly and warranted to address plant pest risks associated with currently admissible medfly host commodities. Medfly is not known to occur in the United States except in Hawaii. Outbreaks of medfly in Florida and California have been eradicated. Medfly is a widespread tropical fruit species, ranging from southern Mexico to Argentina and

throughout the Mediterranean region and all of Africa. It is also established in Hawaii and Western Australia. It is estimated that this species would be able to establish populations in southern regions of the United States (Plant Hardiness Zones 9-11). This fruit fly has been recorded from more than 300 plant species in over 60 families.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist Dorothy Wayson at 301 851-2036, or at Dorothy.C.Wayson@phis.usda.gov