Special Needs Request

Last Modified:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has a formal process for States that want to impose additional restrictions on the interstate movement of items that pose a plant health risk.

Under the Plant Protection Act, (102.97 KB) States or their political subdivisions can ask USDA for permission to impose restrictions beyond what is required by APHIS. These are called special need requests.

Special need requests must be based on sound scientific data. They must include a thorough risk assessment proving that the plant pest or noxious weed does not currently exist in the State, but could cause economic or environmental harm. All requests must be submitted to APHIS through State agriculture departments.

All special needs requests must be submitted to the deputy administrator for plant protection and quarantine, USDA, APHIS, Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Room 301-E, Washington, D.C. 20250. Upon receipt of the special need request, APHIS will publish a notice in the Federal Register. The public will have the opportunity to comment for 60 days following the publication. Once the comment period closes, APHIS will review any comments and publish another notice announcing its decision to either deny or grant the request. If the request is granted, the special need exemption will be applicable for two years, after which the State will have to submit a renewal request. If the request is denied, the

State may submit additional information for reconsideration.

- Federal Register Final Rule (74.39 KB) (PDF; 75Kb) [Docket No. APHIS-2005-0103]
- Docket Details and Comments on Proposal
- Process for Special Need Requests (PDF; 17Kb)

Print