Federal Noxious Weeds

Last Modified:

USDA requires permits for the importation and/or interstate movement of Federal noxious weeds (FNWs) - aquatic and wetland, parasitic and terrestrial- under the authority of 7 CFR 360. You will find a list of the regulated taxa in 7 CFR 360.200.

Section 403 of the Plant Protection Act (PPA) defines Noxious Weed as:

“ *any plant or plant product that can directly or indirectly injure or cause damage to crops (including nursery stock or plant products), livestock, poultry, or other interests of agriculture, irrigation, navigation, the natural resources of the United States, the public health, or the environment.*”

If the species is a Federal noxious weed, and/or a parasitic plant, then fill out PPQ Form 526, Application for permit to move live plant pests or noxious weeds. If sending application by mail or fax, please include your phone number, fax number, and your email address. For faster services, apply online using APHIS eFile. APHIS eFile is a web-based system you can use to apply for a permit online, check the status of your application, view issued permits or other responses and more.

Apply for a Permit

Federal Noxious Weed List

View list to confirm that the species is a Federal noxious weed.

Parasitic plant genera list

Confirm that the genus contains parasitic plants by checking the list of parasitic plant genera. If your species is not on either list, use PPQ form 587.

State/Territory Concurrence

(PDF, 149.85 KB)

State/Territory Concurrence on the Importation/Interstate Movement of Federal Noxious Weeds Used in Commercial Trade

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Do I need a PPQ permit to move a non-Federal noxious weed interstate? How can I tell if a weed is regulated by one or more of the States?

A. You do not need a Federal permit to move a non-Federal noxious weed within the United States. You can check the National Plant Board web site for a list of State-regulated noxious weeds. (Please have patience; this takes a while to load!) Contact the States directly to ask about their restrictions and requirements.

Q. Do I need a plant pest permit to import non parasitic weeds that are not listed in the Federal noxious weed regulations?

A. No. You need to complete a PPQ form 526 (Application for permit to move live plant pests or noxious weeds) only for Federal noxious weeds. If the weed you want to import is not listed in the noxious weed regulations, apply for a PPQ Importer Basic permit, PPQ Form 587 (Application to import plants and plant products). List the species you want to import on the application. Permit specialists will notify you if any of your requested species are prohibited or restricted.

The Germplasm Resources Information Network database also includes information about State regulatory status for individual plant entries.

Q. For scientific or research purpose, will I need to have my containment facility inspected before the permit is issued?

A. This depends on the species of noxious weed plant and the intended use. Generally, if you plan to grow a Federal noxious weed and or parasitic plant and allow it to reproduce, you can expect a containment facility inspection. If you plan to conduct research with small-seeded parasitic weeds, such as *Striga* or *Orobanche* , you must have a high-security containment facility, which must be approved prior to permit issuance. Your permit application triggers our request for a site inspection, if required. A Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) official will contact you to arrange a suitable time.

Q. How long will it take to receive my permit?

A. The average turnaround time for a noxious weed permit is three to four weeks, which includes State consultation. If your containment facility must be inspected, expect a turnaround time of five to six weeks.

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Federal noxious weeds and parasitic plants must be shipped in sturdy, escape-proof containers. Shipments to be imported must contain a copy of the permit, and must have an original PPQ 599 shipping label, which corresponds to the permit, on the outside of the package. PPQ 599 labels will be provided when your permit is issued and you are required to monitor their use. We require the PPQ 599 mailing labels for importations only. Additional labels can be obtained by sending an email to Redandwhitelabelrequest@aphis.usda.gov.

Containment Facility Inspection

In certain cases, a laboratory facility must be inspected in order for us to issue a PPQ 526 Permit. We inspect facilities to determine if they are adequate for containment of the organism(s). You will be informed if your facility must be inspected after review of the permit application. PPQ will conduct the inspection using a PPQ checklist. This is not the same as inspections by Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Safety Officers, or other entities. If your facility must be inspected, you will be notified in writing by our Containment Facility (CF) Staff and you can work with PPQ to set up a date and time for the inspection. Guidelines are available on the containment facility Web page.

Contact Us

For technical information about Federal Noxious Weed permits, contact Pest.Permits@usda.gov.
For information about the APHIS noxious weed program, see the APHIS Noxious Weed Home Page.

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