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Controlled Import Permit Containment Guidelines

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One of the purposes of Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) permits is to prevent the entry and spread of plant pests into and within the United States. PPQ will only issue permits when the receiving facility has the appropriate measures to adequately contain potential pests that could be associated with the growth of imported plants.

Adequate containment of imported plants is required to prevent the potential introduction and dissemination of pests and diseases into the environment in the United States. Many foreign pests and pathogens can go undetected until it is too late to contain, control and remediate the problem, resulting in greater potential for damage and losses to U.S. agricultural production.

Containment Guidelines for Imported Plant Material Received Under a Controlled Import Permit

Facility Inspection

A facility inspection may be required before a PPQ 588 [Controlled Import Permit](#) (CIP) permit is issued. A PPQ containment specialist will evaluate the documentation submitted with the permit application, and determine if the facility is adequate. The applicant will be informed if their facility must be inspected as part of the permitting process. A PPQ inspector will document aspects of the facility to determine if the facility and equipment are adequate for containment of organisms and pests that may be associated with the imported plants. The applicant is required to provide information about the containment facility where the imported plants will be grown. APHIS PPQ may schedule an inspection of the containment facility to confirm that it will adequately safeguard pests and diseases should they occur. Outlined below are the documents that may be requested or steps involved in evaluation of the facility:

Step 1: Standard Operational Procedures

- Submit a Standard Operational Procedures (SOP). For additional information, view [Outline for SOP's document](#) (9.93 KB) document.

Step 2: Greenhouse Containment Questionnaire

- If plants will be grown in a growth chamber or greenhouse then the applicant will be asked to complete a Greenhouse questionnaire. See [Greenhouse Containment Questionnaire](#) (130.19 KB)
- Upon receipt of responses, the greenhouse questionnaire will be evaluated by the permit scientist.

Step 3: Facility Evaluation and Onsite Inspection

- Based on evaluation of the greenhouse questionnaire, APHIS PPQ may conduct a facility inspection.

Your containment growing facility should be ready for APHIS inspection within 30 days after you submit your PPQ Form 588 application.

Containment facilities are subject to random compliance inspections post-permit issuance.

Factors to Consider for the Containment Facility

- **Water:** Water for plants must come from publicly approved deep wells, municipal water or water from other sources purified by filtration through reed-bed systems and slow sand filters in combination with ozonation, ultraviolet irradiation, peroxide or chlorination. Runoff water in the greenhouse should drain to a municipal water system or receive treatment before being reused.
- **Soil/Growing Media:** Used in the greenhouse for imported plants. Must be sterilized and not have been used previously for other plants. Soil that comes into contact with the imported plants must not be reused.
- **Greenhouse Security:** The area where imported plants/seeds are maintained must be secure and only accessible to persons who are directly responsible for the plants or who maintain the plants. Doors must be lockable and access must be limited.
- **Greenhouse Containment:** All vents and openings must be sealed or covered by insect proof mesh. The ventilation system cooling pads, and or evaporative pads must be covered with insect proof mesh to prevent insects from entering or leaving the greenhouse.
- **Greenhouse Flooring and Benches:** The floor and bench surfaces must be constructed of an impervious material that may be easily cleaned and effectively decontaminated. Benches for plants must be at least 24 inches from the floor.
- **Pest Control:** A pesticide program and or pest surveillance program must be in place to control insect pests. The treatments must be recorded.
- **Plant Pathologist:** A plant pathologist (who is not the applicant) must perform a surveillance of the imported plants for pests and diseases once a month and record the findings. The plant pathologist must be someone within driving distance of the containment facility who can be reached if there is an emergency disease outbreak.
- **Plant and Soil Waste:** All plant material that is not used, or plant waste and soil/potting media that comes into contact with the imported plants must be either autoclaved or double bagged and incinerated, or double bagged and taken to a municipal landfill.