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Shipping Requirements for Importing Regulated Soil Requiring Black, White, Green, Yellow Labels

Last Modified:

A shipping label is a tag that identifies an individual shipment. These labels direct the shipment to a designated port of entry or Plant Inspection Station (PIS) where shipments are inspected and cleared by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and/or a United States Department of Agriculture (APHIS) inspector. The permittees permit will state in the conditions if a shipping label is required.

Labels may be issued to the permittee for the importation of regulated articles. Such labels may contain information about the shipment's nature, origin, movement conditions, or other matters relevant to the permit and will indicate that the importation is authorized under the conditions specified in the permit.

All packages for transport must minimally consist of inner/primary and outer/secondary package, both in a securely sealed tertiary container so that all are effective barriers to prevent escape or unauthorized dissemination of the listed regulated materials. The inner/primary package will contain all regulated materials and must be cushioned and sealed inside a secondary container in such a way that both remain sealed during shock, impact, and pressure changes that may occur. The

outermost/tertiary shipping container must be rigid, strong enough, and sealed to withstand typical shipping conditions (dropping, stacking, impact from other freight, etc.) without opening. Imported shipments of 3lbs or less that will be treated at a Plant Inspection Station (PIS) must have an original, Green and Yellow label (PPQ Form 508) attached to the exterior of each shipping package. Shipments being routed directly to USDA approved facilities require Black & White label (PPQ Form 550) Packages without labels on the exterior may be refused entry even if the labels are enclosed. Each label is individually numbered with a distinctive barcode. The permittee must request the appropriate shipping labels at the issuance of permit. Shipping labels and detailed instructions for using the labels will be emailed to the permittee as an attached PDF to the email address on record. The PPQ 508 and 550 shipping labels are required for importation, but not for domestic movement within the mainland U.S. In addition, PPQ 550 shipping labels are not needed for soil that originates in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.

However, shipments from the U.S. Virgin Islands must be sent to APHIS-PPQ in Puerto Rico for inspection and clearance. In order to ship the package to PPQ in Puerto Rico, please follow the instructions in the following paragraph and use two waybills. One waybill to direct the shipment to the PIS and the other to direct the shipment to the permittee from the PIS.

You can obtain your green and yellow as well as your black and white labels through [APHIS eFile](#). Simply log into APHIS eFile, navigate to My Activity and search for your permit. On the permit details page, view and download your labels in the Labels section. If you need additional assistance for green and yellow labels, please email: GreenandyellowPlantslabelrequest@usda.gov. For black and white labels, contact: BlackWhiteGreenYellowlabelrequest@aphis.usda.gov

A PPQ Form 508 shipping label requires two waybills; one international waybill to direct the shipment to the PIS, and a domestic waybill that will direct the shipment to the permittee from the PIS. A domestic waybill should be placed inside the package. Shipments routed directly to a USDA approved facility require PPQ Form 550 shipping label and one waybill to direct the shipment to the permittee. If the addresses don't match, the package may be refused entry by CBP. The information on the waybill will include the following: carrier account number or postage in order to forward the package to the final destination. Your name, permit number, label number, delivery address, and telephone number of the permit holder for delivery

following inspection.

Hand Carry

Permitted articles may be hand carried into the United States only if certain requirements are met. First, hand carrying must be requested in the application and authorized in the permit conditions. The permit conditions will list the specific steps that must be taken in order to hand-carry the articles into the U.S. The applicant may request that someone else be allowed to hand carry the organisms but the person must be identified on the permit. The authorized hand-carrier must follow the permit conditions pertaining to the hand-carried shipment.

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