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Regulated Organism and Soil Permits FAQ's

Last Modified:

How long does it take to receive a permit?

The application could be processed in as little as 30 days but there are many factors which cause the review process to take longer. These factors include, but are not limited to: the need for a facility inspection, the need to obtain additional equipment or equipment certifications, or the need for additional information by PPQ or your State Department of Agriculture. All PPQ 526 permit applications are submitted to the destination states(s) for review. The PPQ staff process permits in the order they are received and recommend that you apply for your permit four to six months in advance.

I am leaving for Australia next week to collect samples. Can I have a permit expedited?

No, we do not expedite permits because so many applicants want their permits expedited, it would cause a backlog of the other permits.

I need my permit right away. Can I skip the State review?

No, we have an agreement with the States that they may review and provide input on PPQ 526 Permits. The State review is an important part of the evaluation process.

How long does the permit last?

Permits are generally issued not to exceed 3 years. However, permits may be issued for shorter periods depending upon the plant pest, risk evaluation, and intended use.

Do I need a USDA permit to import dead plant pests?

USDA does not require permits for dead plant pests*. Under 7CFR 330.200, "biological specimens of plant pests, in preservation or dried, may be imported without further restriction under this part, but subject to inspection on arrival in the United States to confirm the nature of the material and freedom from risk of plant pest dissemination." Packages must not contain any plant material, soil, or other plant pests and are subject to inspection by Customs or USDA officials at the port of entry. In addition, the importer is responsible for complying with other Federal or State requirements (e.g., Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.). Please note that a completed [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Form 3-177](#) may be required to accompany shipments at the point of entry. Here is an email address if you have any questions about the form itself: R9LE_WWW@fws.gov

*Note: Dead bees in the superfamily Apoidea require a notification of arrival, under the authority of 7CFR 322.28).

Do I need a permit to move regulated articles interstate even if they are established in the state where I plan to move them?

Yes. You need a PPQ 526 permit to move interstate ALL plant pests whether they occur in the destination state or not.

Who should apply for the permit, the person who will send the organism or the person who will receive it?

In general, the recipient should apply for the permit since it is his or her responsibility to handle or contain the shipped organism.

What level of containment is necessary for the pest I plan to move?

This depends on the species and its intended use. Domestic, widely distributed plant pests may require little or no containment. However, if you plan to import an exotic, field-collected regulated article of pest status into an area in the U.S. in which it could easily establish, you may be required to import the organism into a high-security containment facility. Non-indigenous, lab reared organisms, pests of low establishment potential or low dispersal capability may require inspection of your facility by State and/or local officials. Other factors taken into consideration when evaluating level of containment include whether the agent is indigenous to the U.S. and to the area where you plan to contain the organism, host plant availability, size and mobility of organism, lifestage, number of organisms shipped and whether you plan to maintain a colony or culture.

Someone in our company has the PPQ 526 Permit in their name. They are leaving the company. Can I change the permit to my name?

1. You may apply for a new permit to replace it especially if the permit is within 3 months of expiration or
2. APHIS allows the person's former supervisor to transfer the permit(s) via written request for amendment.

Someone in our company has a soil permit (P330) in their name. They are leaving the company. Can

I change the permit to my name?

1. You may apply for a new permit to replace it especially if the permit is within 3 months of expiration or
2. APHIS allows the person's former supervisor to transfer the permit(s) via written request for amendment.

I need to have a change made on my permit. How can I have it amended?

You must send us an amendment request in writing (email, fax, or letter). Some changes can be made by amending the permit, but not all. If you need to change the name of the permittee or the address, for instance, you will have to apply for a new permit.

I already have a PPQ 526 Permit. I need to move to a laboratory in a different location. Do I need a new permit to work with the plant pest in the new location?

Yes, you will need to apply for a new permit, because PPQ 526 Permits are address specific.

My permit has expired and I did not realize it. I still need to continue my research. What should I do?

You must apply for a new PPQ 526 Permit. Please note that most of the permits state that pests kept under the permit shall be destroyed at the completion of the intended use and not later than the expiration date, unless an extension is granted by this issuing office. In some cases, you may be able to continue permitted activities while your new permit is pending.

For questions about permits for regulated organisms and soil:

Pest Permits Team

Email: pest.permits@usda.gov

Phone: [301-851-2285](tel:301-851-2285)

Alt-Phone: [866-524-5421](tel:866-524-5421)

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