



# A Quick Guide for Commercial Importers of Plant and Animal Products

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) oversees the import of plants, animals, and related products into the United States. This includes fruits and vegetables, plants and seeds, meat, live animals, hides, trophies, and other agricultural items. Our import regulations help keep the United States free from pests and diseases that could severely damage agriculture and the environment if introduced here.

To help importers and brokers determine which APHIS entry requirements apply to their shipments, we have developed this quick reference guide.

## Plants and Plant Products

Regulated items include:

- Bulbs
- Tubers
- In vitro plantlets, calluses, and embryos
- Cuttings
- Live plants
- Root crowns
- Seeds
- Cut flowers and greenery
- Fruits and vegetables
- Miscellaneous products (such as dried floral arrangements, craft items, or soil)

In short, if it is a plant, was a plant, or could become a plant, we regulate it.

You can check the admissibility of fruits and vegetables in APHIS’ Fruit and Vegetable Import Requirements (FAVIR) database at [www.aphis.usda.gov/favir](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/favir). To check the admissibility of plants and plant products, go to [www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/permits](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/permits) (click on “Plants and Plant Products Permits”). Also, APHIS’ import manuals for plants and plant products are available online at [www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/plants/manuals/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/manuals/).

Plants regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) require special import and export documentation. They must also travel only through certain designated ports. To learn more about permits for items regulated by CITES and ESA, contact the APHIS Permit Unit or go to [www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/cites](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/cites).

The import of Federal noxious weeds is illegal, except under special circumstances. These non-native, invasive plants are a serious threat to U.S. agriculture and natural resources. For more information, go to [www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/fnw](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/fnw).

## Questions?

To learn more about import requirements for plants and plant products, go to our Web site at [www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/plants/plant\\_imports](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/plant_imports).

Or, contact the APHIS Permit Unit:

4700 River Road, Unit 133  
Riverdale, MD 20737  
Phone: (301) 851-2046 or (877) 770-5990 (toll-free)  
Fax: (301) 734-5990  
Email: [plantproducts.permits@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:plantproducts.permits@aphis.usda.gov)



# Animals and Animal Products

Regulated items include, but are not limited to:

## Live Animals

- Livestock animals, including ruminants (e.g., cows, sheep, goats), swine, horses, and poultry
- Birds, including game birds and pet birds
- Hatching eggs
- Wild ruminants, swine, and horses
- Semen and embryos of livestock, birds, and wild ruminants, swine, and horses
- Certain species of fish (those susceptible to spring viremia of carp disease)
- Animals that can carry exotic ticks, including elephants, rhinos, hippos, tapirs, and certain species of turtles

## Animal Products

- Eggs and egg products (from poultry, game birds, or other birds)
- Milk and milk products
- Meat and meat products (from horses, poultry, birds, cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and swine)

## Animal Byproducts

- Animal manure, urine, blood, bones, glands, organs, and related byproducts
- Casings
- Hides, skins, wool, bones, bird capes, and related byproducts
- Products that contain animal-derived ingredients (such as gelatins used in pharmaceuticals and dietary supplements)
- Animal-derived ingredients used in pet food and livestock, poultry, or aquaculture feed
- Trophies

In short, if it is an animal, came from an animal, or has animal ingredients in it, please contact our National Import Export Services staff for specific import information. You may email us at [AskNIES.Products@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:AskNIES.Products@aphis.usda.gov) or call us at (301) 851-3300, option 1.

## Questions?

To learn more about import requirements for animals and animal products, go to our Web site at [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_health/permits](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/permits) and click on “Animal and Animal Product Import Information.”

Or, contact APHIS’ National Import Export Services:

4700 River Road, Unit 39  
Riverdale, MD 20737  
Phone: (301) 851-3300  
Fax: (301) 734-4704/8226  
Email: [AskNIES.Products@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:AskNIES.Products@aphis.usda.gov)

For questions about entry regulations and port-of-entry procedures, contact the APHIS Quarantine, Policy, Analysis and Support staff:

4700 River Road, Unit 60  
Riverdale, MD 20737  
Phone: (301) 851-2312  
Fax: (301) 734-5269

