



USDA, APHIS, PPQ
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Guidance to Applicants for Permits to Import Plant Material for Planting
Circular Q37-1
Updated: 4/18/2018

A. Obtain your permits well in advance to ensure a smooth process. While many applications can be processed quickly, some will involve novel commodities or situations. It is important to provide the Permit Unit with sufficient time to evaluate and address each application appropriately. Please ensure that the information contained in the application is accurate and thorough to help the Permit Unit avoid unnecessary delays associated with having to obtain or modify information from the applicant. You should not place orders until you have received your permits and reviewed the instructions and permit conditions. At present, APHIS does not charge a fee for these permits or mailing labels, with one exception. There is a \$70.00 fee for a Protected Plant Permit to Engage in Business of Importing and Exporting Terrestrial Endangered Species (PPQ 621; CITES) when the plant material is CITES listed and the plant material is offered for commercial importation.

Use the following forms to apply for permits for plants for planting:

Form	Purpose	Comments
PPQ Form 587	Application for permit to import plants and/or plant products	For plants and plant products not listed below and that are listed in the Plants for Planting Manual .
PPQ Form 588	Application for Controlled Import Permit (CIP) to Import Plants or Plant Products for Experimental, Therapeutic, or Developmental Purposes	For articles listed as Not Authorized Pending Pest Risk Analysis (NAPPRA) in the Plants for Planting Manual
PPQ Form 546	Application for a Postentry Quarantine permit	For articles listed as requiring postentry quarantine in the Plants for Planting Manual.
PPQ Form 526	Application for permit to move live plant pests or noxious weeds	For plant pests, pathogens, and organisms regulated under 7 CFR 330, and parasitic plants and noxious weeds listed in 7 CFR 360.
PPQ Form 621	Application for a Protected Plant Permit to engage in the business of importing, exporting, or re-exporting terrestrial endangered species plants.	For plants regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

All CITES protected plants and seeds except where specifically exempted require original CITES documentation to accompany each shipment. CITES importations of a commercial nature (for gain) also require a Protected Plant Permit to Engage in Business of Importing and Exporting Terrestrial Endangered Species (PPQ 621). CITES material must only enter the USA through specific ports which have a Plant Inspection Station (PIS).

See the Permit Website for more information: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/permits/ppq_epermits.shtml

B. Complete every block of your application. We may have to return your application if it lacks sufficient information.

C. Include your home or business street address. APHIS issues permits only to persons who reside in the United States, its territories, and possessions. We cannot accept P.O. Boxes as the address. Plant materials imported by mail are directed from the inspection station to your home or business street address, not to a P.O. Box.

D. Clearly identify the material to be imported. Certain plants are either restricted or prohibited entry. To determine the enterability of the material you wish to import, we must know the scientific (Latin) name(s). The use of common names is ill advised because common names may be used for several different species, each with different entry status. Foreign language names and regional names are not acceptable. If the Permit Unit cannot determine the scientific name of the plants you wish to import from the information you provide, they will return your application to you for additional information.

E. Make sure your plant material is soil-free. If soil is found during an inspection, the plants will be refused entry. Plants established in growing media, except where specifically provided for in the regulations, are not enterable into the United States.

F. List all countries of origin. You must list all plants and seeds separately by countries of origin. Most Canadian plants and seeds are admissible without a written permit, but because pests occur in limited areas of Canada, you should submit an application giving the names of the city and province. The Permit Unit will determine the entry status of the plant material based on this information.

G. Consider the intended means of importation. The application requires you to state the means of importation; that is, surface parcel post, air parcel post, air mail, express, air express, freight, air freight, or personal baggage. The word "air" alone is not sufficient.

Mail Importations: If you are importing by mail (air parcel post or air mail), the Permit Unit will send you green and yellow mailing labels that you must send to the foreign shipper to be attached to each parcel of plant material. The reverse side of each label provides pertinent information which you must convey to the shipper. Translations of these instructions are available in French, German, and Spanish from our office. Further information regarding mail shipments will be included with your permit.

Passenger baggage: You may import small quantities (up to 12) of soil-free plant material that is not subject to prohibition or special restrictions (such as CITES) as passenger baggage through any port of entry. To import more than 12 plants, you must have a written permit and must enter the United States at a port having a Plant Inspection Station. Your plants must be transferred to the inspection station for

clearance. Travel from Bahamas and Bermuda: You cannot bring plant propagative material back by passenger baggage. You must arrange to mail plant propagative material or to send it by cargo or freight at your expense.

Importations other than the above: A customs broker is required at your expense to arrange for freight, cargo, or unaccompanied baggage shipments.

Be aware that importations other than by mail must enter the United States through a location that has a plant inspection station as the port of first arrival:

Mexican Border: Los Indios, Texas; Nogales, Arizona; and San Diego, California.

Atlantic Coast: Miami and Orlando, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Jamaica, New York; Linden, New Jersey; San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Gulf Ports: Los Indios and Houston, Texas; Miami, Florida; and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Pacific Ports: Honolulu, Hawaii; Los Angeles (El Segundo), San Diego, San Francisco, California; Seattle, Washington; and Barrigada, Guam.

H. Be aware that you must obtain a phytosanitary certificate of inspection from the country of origin for any nursery stock or other class of plant, root, bulb, seed, or other plant product, for or capable of propagation, excluding certain plants from Canada (i.e. seeds with a seed analysis certificate and greenhouse-grown plants with a label issued by the CFIA), and plants and articles accompanied by a PPQ-issued permit that provides an exemption from such documentation.