

FOR INFORMATION
DA-2013-56
December 24, 2013

Subject: APHIS Adds New Requirements for fresh blueberry fruit (*Vaccinium* spp.) imported from Chile into the United States.

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

DEC 24 2013

Effective immediately, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is implementing new entry requirements for the importation of fresh blueberry fruit (*Vaccinium* spp.) from Chile into the United States. APHIS is taking this action in response to multiple detections of European Grapevine Moth (EGVM), *Lobesia botrana*, in Chilean blueberry orchards.

To prevent the introduction of EGVM into the United States, APHIS is requiring blueberry shipments from regions VI, VII, and VIII destined to the United States be fumigated with methyl bromide at the point of origin under Title 7 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 305. In addition, shipments will be subject to an increased inspection rate at the port of export and entry.

Until this recent detection, fresh blueberries were not considered to be a preferred host of EGVM and have been allowed into the United States from Chile since 1983. Because of the substantial growth of the EGVM population in Chile during recent seasons and its unexpected detection on fresh blueberry, APHIS has determined that these additional requirements are necessary to prevent the entry of EGVM into the United States on blueberry shipments.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Tony Román, Regulatory Policy Specialist at (301) 851-2242, or Juan.A.Roman@aphis.usda.gov.



John Payne
Acting Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Attachment: Federal Order

FEDERAL ORDER

Importations of Blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.) from Chile December 24, 2013

This Federal Order is issued pursuant to the authority provided by the Plant Protection Act (PPA) of June 20, 2000, as amended, Section 412(a), 7 U.S.C. 7712(a), which authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit or restrict the importation, entry, exportation, or movement in interstate commerce of any plant, plant product, biological control organism, noxious weed, article, or means of conveyance, if the Secretary determines that the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the introduction into the United States or the dissemination of a plant pest or noxious weed within the United States.

The purpose of this Federal Order is to prevent the entry or introduction of the harmful plant pest, European Grapevine Moth (EGVM) (*Lobesia botrana*) in fresh blueberry fruit consignments from Chile into the United States. On December 18, 2012, Chile's Servicio Agrícola Ganadero (SAG) notified the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) that on December 13, 2012, EGVM was detected in a blueberry orchard with fruit destined to the United States. Since that initial detection in the field, the pest has been detected at least nine times during APHIS preclearance export inspections. APHIS has determined that fresh blueberry consignments destined for the United States from Chile pose a significant phytosanitary risk to the United States domestic grape industry; due to the large populations of EGVM in Chile's production areas in the regions VI, VII, and VIII. The APHIS Administrator has determined that because of this significant phytosanitary pest risk, it is necessary to immediately modify the current entry requirements in order to prevent the entry and/or the dissemination of the harmful pest EGVM into the United States via the Chilean fresh blueberry fruit pathway.

The European Grapevine Moth was detected in Chile in April of 2008 on grapes. This pest, a European tortricid, attacks primarily grape flowers and fruit. Damage caused by the pest can be extensive; some growers reported losses of 70% of their grape crops in 2008. The populations of EGVM have increased substantially in Chile over the last two growing seasons. For the 2011-2012 season, a total of 42,254 moths were captured on traps, while records for the 2012-2013 season show a total of 212,218 captures. For the ongoing 2013-2014 season, a total of 146,710 captures have been recorded for the first flight of the moth during the early part of the season.

Fresh blueberries have been allowed into the United States from Chile since 1983. Consignments may or may not be precleared. Currently, most consignments are inspected at the port of export, with APHIS - SAG supervision, under a pre-clearance agreement between Chile and the U.S. Until the December 2012 detections, blueberry was not considered a host of EGVM. Because of the recent detections of EGVM on Chilean blueberries and the recent increasing volume of EGVM captures in traps in regions VI, VII and VIII, APHIS now considers fresh blueberry fruit to be a host of EGVM. APHIS is very concerned about the uncontrolled populations of EGVM in Chile when combined with the polyphagous nature of this pest.

Due to the substantial recent pest population growth, the numerous interceptions and the pest risk described above, APHIS has determined that additional entry requirements are immediately necessary for the import of blueberries from Chile into the United States to prevent the entry

and/or the dissemination of EGVM via the Chilean fresh blueberry pathway. Therefore, effective immediately, all fresh blueberry consignments from Chile must be:

- Subjected to the pre-clearance program at the port of export;
- Fumigated with methyl Bromide (MB) in Chile under 7 CFR 305 if consignments originate from regions VI, VII and VIII.
- Subjected to an increased inspection rate at the port of export and entry.

This action is necessary because the APHIS Administrator has determined that the introduction and establishment of EGVM poses a serious threat to agriculture including certain fruits or vegetables grown in the United States. These restrictions to prevent the introduction and establishment of EGVM are immediately needed and warranted to address plant pest risks associated with currently admissible fresh blueberry fruit.

For additional information regarding this Federal Order, please contact Tony Román, Regulatory Policy Specialist at (301) 851-2242, or via email at Juan.A.Roman@aphis.usda.gov