



“Working Together to Make Trade Work”

**August 7, 2006 - Notice to Trade
Official Phytosanitary Certification**

To facilitate US exports of agricultural products, we find the services of the United States Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), that provide for US official phytosanitary (plant health) certifications, and the Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) to be increasingly important and complex.

This notice and the attached files are intended to provide information to all interested parties on how to work with USDA with regard to official phytosanitary certification. The information can be used to support the efficiency of APHIS and FAS service as well commercial export operations.

Notice Attachments:

1. The attached “**Responsibilities of the exporter or shipper.doc**”, details the responsibilities of exporters who wish to access APHIS official phytosanitary certification services.
2. The attached “**Export Services Staff.doc**” provides a listing of APHIS Export Services Staff and Duties as well as hypertext links to the EXCERPT database. The database contains over 140 sets of the phytosanitary regulations for more than 200 countries. The USDA and its cooperators use the information in EXCERPT when plants and plant products for export (phytosanitary certification). Access to EXCERPT is available to the general public by subscription only. You can find EXCERPT at <http://ceris.purdue.edu/excerpt/>

Contacts for Certification Issues:

In the interest of maintaining efficient and effective communication and process, we recommend all phytosanitary certification questions be addressed directly to APHIS and its cooperators.

**North American Export Grain Association, 1250 Eye Street, NW, Suite 1003
Washington, DC 20005, Tel. 202.682.4030 Fax 202.682.4033
E-mail: info@naega.org Website: www.naega.org**



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APHIS and its cooperators should be the primary contact for questions about a country's phytosanitary import requirements, prior to exportation. Such questions can be directed to:

1. The office of the local **Authorized Certification Official (ACO)**. APHIS does not keep a listing of these, as they could be state, county or federal. Export Certification Specialists (see point 2 below) can provide contact information for ACOs within the respective ECS area of coverage.

2. The **Export Certification Specialist (ECSs)** covering the location where service is required can also be contacted. ECSs may cover a specific state, multiple states, or a specific region within a state. ECSs can also assist exporters with problems in obtaining certification or if a consignment is being held in the importing country. A listing of ECSs can be found at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/pim/exports/es_certification_specialist.html

3. When a problem can not be resolved at the ACO or ECS level, **APHIS Export Services (ES)** is available. ES can be contacted either directly or through the local ECS. ES is responsible for maintaining current information on the plant quarantine import requirements of foreign countries, as well as analyzing the information and preparing export summaries of the foreign import requirements. In addition, ES monitors the export program and the issuance of certificates to ensure accuracy and compliance to program policies and procedures.

In summary ES, directly and through its cooperators (ACOs and ECSs), is responsible for assisting exporters when they experience problems of a phytosanitary nature with exporting consignments. Those problems include determining phytosanitary import requirements, assisting with the phytosanitary certification of consignments and assisting with obtaining the release of consignments on hold. ES staff and duties are listed in attached file: Export Services staff.doc

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Contacts for Non-Certification Issues:

The export grain industry is very fortunate in that APHIS has established a **Grain Trade Director** as part of staff. Should an importing country's requirements be, such that a commodity can not be traded (trade issue - not a certification issue) inquires should be directed to the Grain Trade Director, Tom O'Connor at 301 734-5926. The APHIS Grain Trade Director, working with academia, industry and US Government (APHIS, GIPSA and FAS included) resources, is also very effective on emerging phytosanitary issues affecting the trade of grain, oilseeds and their products.

The **USDA Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)**: <http://www.fas.usda.gov/> is very much engaged in efforts to expand and maintain U.S. export opportunities through the transparent development and implementation of science-based SPS and TBT-related measures. FAS serves industry in assisting in problem identification, coordinating issue response and managing follow-up with appropriate U.S. and foreign government regulatory and/or trade agencies, FAS/Post overseas, and the food industry. The [Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards](#) (FAIRS) reporting system's Export Certificate Report provides information on foreign countries' technical requirements for food and agricultural imports. The FAIRS system also contains country and subject reports. In its trade servicing capacity, FAS works closely with APHIS on phytosanitary certification issues.

Definitions of Forms:

The Phytosanitary Certificate, PPQ Form 577 is used to certify that the domestic plants or plant products have been inspected according to appropriate procedures, and they are considered to be free from quarantine pests, practically free from other injurious pests, and conform to the current phytosanitary regulations of the importing country. The Phytosanitary Certificate, PPQ Form 577, is sometimes referred to as a FPC (Federal Phytosanitary Certificate). FPC refers to a phytosanitary certificate (PC) that is issued by the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPQ) of the United States and is

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recognized by our trading partners for the purpose of international trade of U.S origin plants or plant products...

The Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export, PPQ Form 579 is used to certify that foreign origin plants or plant products conform to the current phytosanitary regulations of the importing country and that during storage in the United States, the consignment has not been subjected to the risk of infestation or infection. The Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export, PPQ Form 579, is sometimes referred to as a FPC-R (Federal Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export). FPC-R refers to a phytosanitary certificate (PC) issued by the National Plant Protection Organization (PPQ) of the United States and is recognized by our trading partners for the purpose of international trade of foreign origin plants or plant products..

The Export Certificate, Processed Plant Products, PPQ Form 578 (abbreviated PPC) is used to certify approved processed products that cannot be issued a Phytosanitary Certificate, PPQ Form 577 (FPC) or a Phytosanitary Certificate for Re-export (PPQ form 579). The PPC affirms that, based on inspection or processing, the product is believed to be free from injurious plant pests. PPCs are issued only for articles specified in EXCERPT. Importantly, while the PPC refers to a certificate issued by the National Plant Protection Organization of the United States, this certificate is not a phytosanitary certificate nor is it an internationally recognized certificate by the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The IPPC provides for international standards for phytosanitary measures.

Final Thoughts:

NAEGA continues to find considerable success in working with APHIS and FAS in their respective roles and service to industry in our work to mitigate numerous non-tariff trade barriers for grains, oilseeds and their products. We look forward to continuing to refine the related process and policy. We encourage all stakeholders to utilize this information in order to optimize the related actions of both the public and private sector. Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance.

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