

FOR INFORMATION

DA-2008-07

February 8, 2008

SUBJECT: Approval of U.S. Irradiation Facilities for Phytosanitary Treatment of Commodities

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

APHIS is considering placing a notice in the Federal Register soliciting applications from U.S. irradiation facilities that may be interested in using this technology for phytosanitary purposes. Several categories of commodities could be treated in U.S. irradiation facilities after receiving APHIS certification--(1) imported commodities treated to meet condition of entry into the United States when allowed, (2) U.S. commodities for export, and (3) U.S. commodities from regulated areas to non-regulated areas.

In order to be approved, an irradiation facility must meet requirements as described in 7CFR305. The facility must also ensure that all necessary agreements, including the framework equivalency work plan signed by the foreign National Plant Protection Organization and Compliance Agreements with the facility owner/operator and the importer, are in place before an imported commodity may be treated.

At present, Federal Regulations 7CFR305.31 (b) prohibit establishment of irradiation facilities used for phytosanitary measures in some Southern States. However, APHIS has become aware of considerable interest in irradiating Mexican products in U.S. facilities in proximity to the Mexican Border. Therefore, depending upon the petitions received, APHIS may work with certain States in amending regulations to allow facilities to operate under specific conditions consistent with procedures used for imported commodities and/or products originating from Hawaii for interstate movement to the continental United States as per regulations 7CFR305.34.

Advantages of irradiating commodities in the United States are:

1. Viable alternative to methyl bromide treatments.
2. Development of U.S. based irradiation industry and expansion of the use of irradiation as a phytosanitary treatment.
3. Provides for safe conditions for U.S. inspectors when security conditions at the foreign locations are considered unsafe.
4. Reduces burden on APHIS resources to establish preclearance programs abroad.

For additional information, please contact William Wesela of our Quarantine Policy, Analysis and Support staff at (301) 734-5718 or [William.D.Wesela@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:William.D.Wesela@aphis.usda.gov) .

**/s/ Paul R. Eggert for**

Rebecca A. Bech  
Deputy Administrator  
Plant Protection and Quarantine