

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION  
DA-2008-73  
November 13, 2008

SUBJECT: Implementation of Irradiation Preclearance Program for Mexican Guavas.

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On October 14, 2008, APHIS published a notice in the Federal Register advising the public of its decision to begin issuing permits for the importation of commercial shipments of guavas from Mexico. The guavas must be treated with irradiation prior to export and in compliance with APHIS regulations 7CFR 305.31 to target plant pests.

The APHIS Preclearance Program for irradiation of guavas from Mexico establishes multiple layers of safeguards to minimize pest risk. It has been in development for over a year. Pending facility certification by APHIS' Center for Plant Health, Science and Technology (CPHST), irradiated guavas could begin arriving from Mexico via air cargo and land border crossing as early as November 21, 2008.

Prior to treatment, the guavas will be jointly inspected by representatives from Mexico's National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) and APHIS. Once guavas have been approved to proceed to treatment, they must be irradiated with a minimum absorbed dose of 400 gray (Gy) in the pest proof boxes in which they are packed. The 400 Gy is the maximum dose required for treatment of fruits and vegetables for phytosanitary purposes and mitigates the risk of all plant pests of the class Insecta, except pupae and adults of the order Lepidoptera. The irradiation dose is sufficient to prevent adult emergence or cause sterility among the insects. Although it is possible that live insects may be found after treatment, the biological risk of these targeted pests will be fully mitigated.

APHIS and Mexico's NPPO will jointly verify treatment efficacy by ensuring that the target minimum dose has been absorbed by the product prior to shipment to the United States. The treated commodities are to be safeguarded immediately after treatment until they reach the United States ports of entry.

The guavas must arrive in the United States with appropriate documentation including an official foreign phytosanitary certificate from the NPPO and a PPQ Form 203, Foreign Site Certificate of Inspection and Treatment. Importers must have an Import Permit from APHIS-PPQ for the importation of such treated commodities.

If you would like additional information, please contact Mr. C. Fredric Mann with the Quarantine Policy Analysis and Support staff at (301) 734-8295.

/s/ Paul Eggert for

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