

FOR INFORMATION AND ACTION
DA-2007-14
April 20, 2007

SUBJECT: **Correction** - Implementation of Irradiation Preclearance Program for Indian Mangos

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

On March 12, 2007, conditions governing the entry of mangoes from India were published in the Federal Register under 7 CFR 319.56-2tt. This rule approves the entry of commercial consignments of mangoes to the United States that have been treated with irradiation prior to export. The revised irradiation rule, published on January 27, 2006, under 7 CFR 305.31, establishes guidelines for irradiation treatments of imported regulated articles. It also specifies that imported irradiated articles of foreign origin must enter the United States through a USDA-APHIS preclearance program.

The Irradiation Preclearance Program establishes multiple layers of safeguards to minimize pest risk. The program has just been approved for the quarantine treatment of Indian mangos. **It is anticipated that the irradiation treatment facility in India will be certified next week. Pending this certification,** irradiated mangos could be arriving from India by air cargo by the end of April. Although shipments are authorized for entry at all ports, likely ports for the first shipments include Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Newark, New York (Kennedy), and Washington (Dulles).

Upon arrival at the certified irradiation facility and prior to treatment in the country of origin, mangoes are jointly inspected by representatives from India's National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) and by a USDA-APHIS preclearance officer. Once mangos have been approved to proceed to treatment, they must be irradiated in the pest-proof boxes in which they are packed. After treatment has been completed, data for each treated lot will be analyzed. Both APHIS and India's NPPO jointly verify treatment efficacy by ensuring the target minimum dose has been delivered to the product prior to shipment to the United States. Treatment information is documented and recorded on both the phytosanitary certificate and PPQ's Foreign Site Certificate of Inspection and Treatment (Form 203), both of which must accompany the consignment to the United States. Additionally, a recordkeeping system is in place that ensures all treated fruit can be traced back to the grower. Pest-proof boxes prevent the possibility of re-infestation post treatment. The identity of treated fruit is maintained either by wrapping palletized boxes with polyethylene shrink wrap or strapping or by safeguarding the movement of the boxes until loading in air cargo containers at the port of exit has been completed.

The Indian mango rule specifies that mangos must be treated in the country of origin with the generic dose of 400 Gray. At this level, the generic dose mitigates the risk of all plant pests of the class Insecta, except pupae and adults of the order Lepidoptera. Currently, there is no accepted generic dose for mites (with the exception of *Brevipalpus chilensis*),

mollusks, nematodes, and plant pathogens. Pest mortality is not the intended outcome of irradiation treatments, although it may be a result of the treatment. The irradiation dose is meant to be sufficient to prevent adult emergence, retard insect growth and development, or cause sterilization of the insect. It is possible that live insects may be found after treatment; however, the pest risk will be mitigated for targeted pests. The irradiation dose administered to Indian mangos for phytosanitary purposes has a similar objective as irradiation of fruit flies in the Sterile Insect Release Program, which is to make target insects incapable of completing their life cycle.

The Irradiation Rule and the Irradiation Preclearance Program establish a system of ensuring quarantine security. If live pests are found upon entry to the United States and dose administered is verified, then there is no significant phytosanitary risk for **targeted pests**, and the consignment will be released without further assessment of the viability of the insect.

Consignments arriving in the United States must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate and PPQ Form 203. Importers must have an import permit from APHIS-PPQ for the importation of such treated commodities.

If you would like additional information regarding this, please contact Vanessa Schreier at (301) 734-8259.

/s/ John H. Payne for

Richard L. Dunkle
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine