

FEDERAL QUARANTINE ORDER

Revised Conditions for the Interstate Movement of Citrus Nursery Stock and Packinghouse Procedures for Citrus Fruit from Sweet Orange Scab (SOS)-Quarantined Areas

DA-2024-34
August 29, 2024

Effective immediately, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is revising the conditions for the interstate movement of citrus nursery stock (CNS) and updating the inspection requirements for CNS to be eligible for shipment. This Federal Order also updates the “[APHIS-Approved Packinghouse Procedures for *Elsinoe australis*, Causal Agent of Sweet Orange Scab \(SOS\)](#)” for the movement of regulated fruit which is maintained on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#). This Federal Order supersedes previous SOS Federal Orders.

This Federal Order is issued in accordance with the regulatory authority provided by the Plant Protection Act of June 20, 2000, as amended, Section 412(a), 7 U.S.C. 7712(a). The Act authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit or restrict the movement in interstate commerce of any plant, plant part, article, or means of conveyance, if the Secretary determines the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the dissemination of a plant pest within the United States. State agricultural authorities may prescribe additional safeguards and protocols.

Specifically, this Federal Order establishes the requirements that allow CNS grown and maintained outdoors or not grown and maintained in an APHIS-approved structure in SOS-quarantined areas to be moved through commercial citrus-producing areas not quarantined for SOS under a limited permit. Additionally, these conditions allow movement to non-contiguous SOS-quarantined areas under a limited permit. Previously, APHIS allowed CNS grown and maintained outdoors or not grown and maintained in an APHIS-approved structure in SOS-quarantined areas to be moved only to non-commercial citrus-producing areas with a limited permit and did not allow the movement of CNS to non-contiguous quarantine areas. Under this condition, material must be safeguarded during transit through areas not quarantined for SOS. This amendment provides relief to citrus nursery growers while sufficiently mitigating the risk of disseminating SOS to areas outside the quarantined area through the movement of CNS.

This Federal Order also modifies the requirements to ship CNS from an APHIS-approved structure in an SOS-quarantined area under a certificate to align with the CNS protocol found on the [APHIS citrus diseases webpage](#), which provides standards and requirements for the interstate movement of CNS from areas quarantined for citrus pests and pathogens. APHIS is updating the inspection requirements for CNS from an SOS-quarantined area to be eligible for shipment. Specifically, this Federal Order removes the requirement for a pre-shipment inspection, establishes the requirement for

three consecutive monthly negative inspection cycles within a 90-day period, and clarifies the language related to monthly inspection cycles.

Additionally, to consolidate requirements for the movement of all regulated articles from SOS quarantine areas, this Federal Order adds a section that references the requirements for the movement of rutaceous leaves for consumption. The “Protocol for the Interstate Movement of Fresh, Mature Rutaceous Leaves for Consumption” can be found on the [APHIS citrus diseases webpage](#).

Furthermore, this Federal Order adds necessary language informing stakeholders that descriptions of all areas quarantined for SOS will be published on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#). After such a change is made, APHIS will notify State, Territory, and Tribal Plant Regulatory Officials about the change and describe the changes.

Finally, this Federal Order updates the [APHIS-Approved Packinghouse Procedures for SOS](#) for regulated fruit. After a review of the efficacy of sodium hypochlorite treatments, APHIS is modifying the required pH range for the sodium hypochlorite solution to 5.5 to 7.0 (previously 6.0 to 7.5) to enhance the effectiveness of the treatment. This change also aligns with the requirements listed in the [APHIS Domestic Treatment Manual](#) for citrus canker.

In addition to the requirements in this Federal Order, the movement of regulated citrus articles from quarantined areas for citrus canker (CC), citrus greening/Huanglongbing (CG/HLB), Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), and citrus black spot (CBS) must follow requirements stipulated in: (1) regulations contained in [7 CFR § 301.75](#) for CC; (2) regulations contained in [7 CFR 301.76](#) for CG/HLB and ACP; (3) Federal Orders for movement conditions for CC, CG/HLB, ACP, and CBS; and (4) all applicable State laws.

This Federal Order and the [APHIS-Approved Packinghouse Procedures](#) can be found on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#).

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A. Quarantined Areas:

The Administrator will list as a quarantined area each State, or each portion of a State, in which SOS has been confirmed by an inspector to be present, in which the Administrator has reason to believe that SOS is present, or that the Administrator considers necessary to quarantine because of its inseparability for quarantine enforcement purposes from localities in which SOS has been found.

Less than an entire State will be designated as a quarantined area only if the Administrator determines that:

1. The State has adopted and is enforcing restrictions on the intrastate movement of the regulated articles that are substantially the same as those imposed by the Administrator on the interstate movement of regulated articles; and
2. The designation of less than the entire State as a quarantined area will be sufficient to prevent interstate spread of SOS.

The Administrator or an inspector may temporarily designate any non-quarantined area as a quarantined area. The Administrator will give a copy of this Federal Order along with a written notice for the temporary designation to the owner or person in possession of the non-quarantined area. Thereafter, the interstate movement of any regulated article from an area temporarily designated as a quarantined area will be subject to this Federal Order. As soon as practicable, this area will be added to the list of quarantined areas, or the designation will be terminated by the Administrator or an inspector. The owner or person in possession of an area for which the designation is terminated will be given notice of the termination as soon as practical.

The Administrator will publish a description of all areas quarantined for SOS on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#). After a change is made to the description of quarantined areas, the Administrator will notify State Plant Regulatory Officials that a change has occurred and describe the changes to the quarantined areas. The description of each quarantined area will include the date the description was last updated and a description of any changes that have been made to the quarantined area. Lists of all quarantined areas may also be obtained by request from any local Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) office; local offices are listed in telephone directories and on the [APHIS citrus disease webpage](#).

**Federal Order DA-2024-36 September 10, 2024,
[APHIS Expands the Sweet Orange Scab Quarantined Area in California](#)**

B. Regulated Articles:

The following are regulated articles, and may not be moved interstate from a quarantined area unless accompanied by a certificate or limited permit issued in accordance with this Federal Order:

1. Fruit of *Citrus* spp. and *Fortunella* spp.
2. All plants and plant parts (except seeds), including leaves for consumption, budwood, and nursery stock of *Citrus* spp. and *Fortunella* spp.
3. Other articles intended for consumption, such as apparel or a similar personal accessory, or items for decorative use made from *Citrus* spp. and *Fortunella* spp.
4. Any other products, articles, or means of conveyance of any character whatsoever, when it is determined by an inspector that they present a

hazard in the spread of SOS, and the person in possession thereof has been provided notice.

C. Conditions for Interstate Movement of Regulated Articles:

1. Regulated articles may move interstate within a contiguous SOS-quarantined area without further restriction.
2. Regulated fruit from SOS-quarantined areas may move interstate under a certificate to all States under the following conditions:
 - a. Fruit must be washed, brushed, disinfected, treated, and waxed prior to shipment, using an APHIS-approved packinghouse procedure located on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#); and
 - i. Fruit must be practically free of leaves, stems, or other regulated plant material, except that stems shorter than one inch may be attached to fruit but cannot have attached leaves; and
 - ii. Fruit must be packed in a packinghouse operating under a signed compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - iii. The certificate must be present on both the paperwork accompanying the shipment and on the containers in which the fruit is packed.
 - or**
 - b. Fruit must be washed, brushed, and disinfected prior to shipment using an APHIS- approved packinghouse procedure located on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#); and
 - i. Fruit has been inspected and determined to be asymptomatic based on visual inspection by an inspector at the packinghouse; and
 - ii. Fruit must be practically free of leaves, stems, or other regulated plant material, except that stem less than one inch may be attached to fruit but cannot have attached leaves; and
 - iii. Fruit must be packed in a packinghouse operating under a signed compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - iv. The certificate must be present on both the paperwork accompanying the shipment and on the containers in which the fruit is packed.
3. Regulated fruit from SOS-quarantined areas may move interstate and transit non-quarantined areas under a limited permit to noncommercial citrus-producing areas and commercial citrus-producing areas with a statewide SOS-quarantine under the following conditions:
 - a. Fruit must be washed, brushed, and disinfected at the packinghouse, prior to shipment using APHIS-approved packinghouse procedure located on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#); and
 - b. Fruit must be practically free of leaves, stems, or other regulated plant material, except that stems less than one inch may be attached to

- fruit but cannot have attached leaves; and
- c. Fruit must be packed in a packinghouse operating under a signed compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - d. The limited permit must be present on both the paperwork accompanying the shipment and on the containers in which the fruit is packed.
4. Regulated fruit from SOS-quarantined areas that are destined for processing or packing outside the quarantined areas may move under a limited permit if it meets the following conditions:
- a. Fruit may have attached stems and leaves when moved interstate for processing/packing; and
 - b. After packing/processing, fruit may only have attached stems that are less than one inch long, without leaves; and
 - c. The limited permit must be present on both the paperwork accompanying the shipment and on the containers in which the fruit is packed; and
 - d. The processor/packinghouse/grower in the originating State and the processor/packinghouse in the receiving State must operate under a signed compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - e. Processors/packing/growers houses in the originating State must operate under a Compliance Agreement that stipulates the following:
 - i. Any fruit that is moved from the quarantined area must be transported in vehicles that meet the following conditions:
 - 1) If the vehicle has solid wall construction on the sides and rear of the cargo area and any openings around the tailgate or hinged door do not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, only the open top must be covered with a tarpaulin or equivalent cover; and
 - 2) If the vehicle has side and rear wall construction of wire mesh screen or expanded metal less than or equal to $\frac{3}{4}$ x 1-1 $\frac{1}{16}$ inch, only the open top must be covered with a tarpaulin or equivalent cover; and
 - 3) If the vehicle has screen mesh openings greater than $\frac{3}{4}$ x 1-1 $\frac{1}{16}$ inch, the cargo area must be covered completely (to the bed of the vehicle). In addition, if mesh size is greater than $\frac{3}{4}$ x 1-1 $\frac{1}{16}$ inch, all reductions in mesh size must be done from within the cargo area (e.g., adding steel, fabric, or hardware cloth lining); and
 - ii. Vehicles transporting pallet boxes, field boxes, field bins, etc., must have the cargo area covered with a tarpaulin or otherwise covered in a manner that does not allow any openings greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. In most cases, this cover will have to extend to below the top of the bottom row of boxes. However, if the pallet boxes or field boxes are stacked in a solid wall with no

- openings of
½ inch or more on the side or back, only the open tops of the exposed boxes are required to be covered; and
- iii. Covers or tarpaulins may be constructed of any fabric that has a weave of less than ½ inch. In addition, covers must be in good repair and securely fastened or tied down in a manner that will prevent the loss of fruit, leaves, or plant debris while in transit; and
 - iv. Identity of each load of fruit must be maintained by issuing an individually numbered trip ticket containing the following information:
 - 1) Name of Grove, Landowner/agent, Lessee, Harvester; and
 - 2) License tag number; and
 - 3) Number of boxes contained in load (if not bulk); and
 - 4) Grove block fruit originated in; and
 - 5) Processing plant or packinghouse to which fruit is destined; and
 - 6) Date of harvest; and
 - 7) The word "TARP" written clearly, preferably at the bottom; and
 - v. After being emptied and cleaned of plant debris, trailers, field boxes, or bins must be disinfected using:
 - 1) A 200-ppm solution of sodium hypochlorite with a pH of 5.5 to 7.0; or
 - 2) A 0.2-percent solution of a quaternary ammonium chloride (QAC) compound; or
 - 3) A solution containing 85 parts per million Phenoxy acetic acid PAA (indoor use only); and
- f. Processors and packinghouses receiving fruit for processing or packing must operate under a Compliance Agreement that stipulates the following:
- i. After shipments are emptied at the processing plant or packinghouse, trailers, tarpaulins, field boxes, and field bins must be cleaned of all leaves and other plant debris; and
 - ii. After being emptied at the processing plant or packinghouse and cleaned of plant debris, trailers, field boxes or bins must be disinfected using:
 - 1) A 200-ppm solution of sodium hypochlorite with a pH of 5.5 to 7.0; or
 - 2) A 0.2-percent solution of a QAC compound; or
 - 3) A solution containing 85 parts per million PAA (indoor use only); and
- g. Culls and peels, or other plant material that remains after processing must be handled as follows:
- i. The plant parts must be moved in an enclosed or covered

- vehicle cargo area. The cargo must be enclosed or covered in a manner to have no openings greater than ½ inch exposing the leaves, litter, etc; and
- ii. When plant material comes directly in contact with the vehicle, the vehicle must be disinfected following movement; and
 - iii. The plant parts must be destroyed by one of the following methods:
 - 1) Heat treated to at least 180 degrees Fahrenheit for a period of at least one (1) hour; or
 - 2) Incinerated; or
 - 3) Buried at a landfill or other disposal site approved by APHIS or the State and covered with dirt at the end of every day that dumping occurs; or
 - 4) Fed to livestock as feed.
5. *Citrus* spp. and *Fortunella* spp. fruit moving through SOS-quarantined areas may move interstate without a certificate or limited permit if all the following conditions are met:
- a. Fruit is accompanied by either: A receipt showing that the fruit was purchased outside the quarantined area or a bill of lading that states the location of the premises where the shipment originated, the type and quantity of fruit being moved interstate, and the date the interstate movement began; and
 - b. Fruit is moved through the quarantined area without being unloaded, and no regulated article, except fruit that qualifies for interstate movement from the quarantined area in accordance with this Federal Order, is added to the shipment in the quarantined area; and
 - c. Fruit is completely covered, enclosed in containers, or in a compartment of a vehicle during movement through the quarantined area.
6. *Citrus* spp. and *Fortunella* spp. fruit from outside the quarantined area moving into the SOS-quarantined area for unloading or repackaging may move interstate with a certificate to all States under the following conditions:
- a. Fruit is accompanied by either: A receipt showing that the fruit was purchased outside the quarantined area or a bill of lading that states the location of the premises where the shipment originated, the type and quantity of regulated fruit being moved interstate, and the date the interstate movement began; and
 - b. The person who unloads or repackages the fruit in a quarantined area must enter into a compliance agreement with APHIS and issue and attach a certificate for the interstate movement of the fruit; and
 - c. The certificate must be present on both the paperwork accompanying the shipment and on the containers in which the fruit is packed; and
 - d. The identity of each shipment of fruit that originated from outside the quarantined area must be maintained and the fruit must be properly segregated from all other fruit in the packinghouse or warehouse; and

- 9.** Nursery stock from SOS-quarantined areas that is grown and maintained outdoors or not grown and maintained in an APHIS-approved structure will be allowed interstate movement through non-quarantined commercial citrus-producing areas and to non-contiguous SOS-quarantined areas with a limited permit under the following conditions:

 - a.** Any person engaged in growing, processing, handling, or moving host nursery stock in an SOS-quarantine area must enter into a compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - b.** Nursery stock may only be shipped if accompanied by a limited permit issued by an inspector verifying that all conditions of this Federal Order and any additional requirements stipulated in the compliance agreement have been met. A copy of the limited permit must be attached to the consignee's copy of the accompanying waybill; and
 - c.** Nurseries must be inspected by an inspector on a quarterly basis to verify the absence of SOS; and
 - d.** Nursery stock must undergo a pre-shipment inspection on each lot within five days of shipment. If no SOS-positive plants are found, the plants may be shipped after treatment with an APHIS-approved fungicide. The list of approved treatments is located on the [APHIS sweet orange scab webpage](#); and
 - e.** Each individual host plant being moved interstate must be labeled with the statement: "Limited permit: USDA-APHIS-PPQ. Not for distribution in portions of the United States not quarantined for sweet orange scab", and must include adequate identifying information to permit trace back to each premise on which the plants were grown; and
 - f.** The nursery stock must be moved interstate in a completely enclosed container that is sealed with an agricultural seal which must remain intact throughout movement to the destination specified on the limited permit; and
 - g.** The agricultural seal may only be removed at the destination specified on the limited permit by an inspector; and
 - h.** Facilities must maintain records of inspections, treatments, invoices, and shipments made under these conditions and make the records available to APHIS upon request. Each facility must maintain all records for at least three years after the interstate shipment of the nursery stock; and
 - i.** Facility owners and employees must allow inspectors access to the facility to ensure compliance with this Federal Order.

- 10.** Nursery stock from quarantined areas that is grown and maintained in an APHIS-approved structure will be allowed interstate movement to all States with a certificate under the following conditions:

 - a.** Any person engaged in growing, processing, handling, or moving host nursery stock in an SOS-quarantined area must enter into a compliance agreement with APHIS; and
 - b.** The nursery stock may only be propagated using materials that

originate from an APHIS-approved State-certified clean stock program; and

- c. Nursery stock may only be shipped if accompanied by a certificate issued by an inspector verifying that all conditions of this Federal Order and any additional requirements stipulated in the compliance agreement have been met. A copy of the certificate must be attached to the consignee's copy of the accompanying waybill; and
- d. Nurseries must be inspected by an inspector no fewer than 28 days and no greater than 35 days before shipment, to verify the absence of SOS; and
- e. Nursery stock must undergo three consecutive monthly negative inspection cycles within a 90-day period to be eligible for shipment; and
- f. Each host plant being moved interstate must be labeled with adequate identifying information to permit trace back to each premises on which the plants were grown; and
- g. Facilities must maintain records of inspections, treatments, invoices, and shipments made under this Federal Order and make the records available to APHIS upon request. Each facility must maintain all records for at least three years after the interstate shipment of the citrus nursery stock; and
- h. Facility owners and employees must allow inspectors access to the facility to ensure compliance with this Federal Order.

11. Rutaceous leaves for consumption may be moved interstate from the SOS-quarantined area by following the conditions listed in the "Protocol for the Interstate Movement of Fresh, Mature Rutaceous Leaves for Consumption," which can be found on the [APHIS citrus diseases webpage](#).

D. Definitions

APHIS-Approved Structure: A screen house, greenhouse, or other enclosure that has been approved by APHIS to grow citrus for interstate movement.

Certificate: A document, stamp, or other means of identification approved by APHIS and issued by an inspector or person operating under a compliance agreement when he or she finds that, because of certain conditions, a regulated article can be moved safely from a quarantined area.

Commercial Citrus-Producing areas: The areas of Alabama, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Louisiana, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Texas, and Virgin Islands of the United States.

Compliance Agreement: A written agreement between APHIS and a person engaged in growing, processing, handling, or moving regulated or associated articles, wherein the person agrees to comply with stipulations set forth in the agreement.

Inspector: Any employee of APHIS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, or any employee of a State or county, or any other person specifically authorized by the Administrator to perform the duties required under this Order.

Limited Permit: A document issued by an inspector or person operating under a compliance agreement to allow the interstate movement of regulated articles to a specified destination,