



**MARITIME EXCHANGE**  
for the Delaware River and Bay

**ALERT**

**March 27, 2020**

TO: Maritime Operations Committee  
Ag Working Group

The Maritime Exchange is forwarding the following USDA-APHIS PPQ update for your information.

### **APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine Provides an Update on Import and Export Activities for Plants and Plant Products**

We recognize the many challenges the COVID-19 pandemic poses to trade. We are doing all we can to ensure the health and safety of our employees while still delivering the services you need. At this time, we continue to provide all of our regular plant and plant product import and export services, including:

- Accepting and processing permit applications,
- Inspecting imported plants and plant products,
- Identifying intercepted pests,
- Monitoring phytosanitary treatment activities, and
- Inspecting and certifying plants and plant products for export.

### **Accepting Electronic Certificates and Forms During the COVID-19 Emergency**

To help facilitate the clearance of imported plants and plant products during the COVID-19 emergency, APHIS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will accept electronically produced versions of phytosanitary certificates, effective immediately. Importers and brokers may upload the electronic documents to the Automated Commercial Environment using the Document Imaging System or provide them by other means, such as email attachments. Acceptable phytosanitary certificates include scanned copies of original certificates, electronic certificates created through a participating country's ePhyto system, or signed paper forms. Certificates should be legible and include APHIS-required statements.

In addition, we will allow precleared consignments to be accompanied by an email from APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) with an electronic copy of PPQ Form 203 attached, if the original form is not available.

### **We Are Here For You**

Please continue to work with our PPQ staff as you normally do. They are available by phone and email. You may also submit import or export-related questions using the following contact information:

- Plant or plant product imports: email [plantproducts.permits@usda.gov](mailto:plantproducts.permits@usda.gov) or call 1-877-770-5990
- Plant or plant product exports: locate your [export certification specialist](#) or email [ppgexportservices@usda.gov](mailto:ppgexportservices@usda.gov)

We continue to closely monitor this evolving situation and will provide updates as needed. Be sure to regularly check the [APHIS website](#) for the latest information.

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