

CANADA

D- 96-20: Canadian Growing Media Program, Prior Approval Process and Import Requirements for Plants Rooted in Approved Media

Effective Date: June 2, 2014
(7th Revision)

Subject

This directive contains the Canadian Growing Media Program (CGMP) and states the phytosanitary import requirements for plants rooted in approved media not containing soil and related matter.

This directive has been revised to make minor administrative changes. The content of this directive has not changed.

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Review

This directive will be updated as required. For further information or clarification, please contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

Endorsement

Approved by:

Chief Plant Health Officer

Amendment Record

Amendments to this directive will be dated and distributed as outlined in the distribution below.

Distribution

1. Directive mail list (Regions, PHRA, USDA)
2. Provincial Government, Industry (via Regions)
3. National Industry Organizations (determined by Author)
4. Internet

Introduction

Soil is recognized internationally as a high risk pathway for the introduction of numerous organisms injurious to plants. The introduction of soil-inhabiting pests into Canada could cause an increase in crop production costs, serious crop loss and damage to plants in non-cultivated environments, and loss of export markets for Canadian agricultural and forestry commodities. Section 1.3 of this document lists examples of soil-inhabiting quarantine pests of Canada that are regulated by the CFIA. These pests are found in many countries around the world.

Restrictions have been put in place to prevent the introduction into Canada of quarantine pests associated with soil. The importation of soil is prohibited into Canada from all off-continent sources and some areas of the United States (U.S.) The Canadian greenhouse and floriculture industries have expressed a desire to source plants with growing media, as certain plants do not thrive when transported bare-root.

In 1974, the first CGMP was developed to allow the entry of plants growing in approved media. The program required prior approval for all media, before importation was authorized. Approved exporting facilities were required to demonstrate fully their ability to meet all requirements before approval was granted. The approved facilities were also required to maintain conditions whereby the exported plants and approved media would be free of plant pests and relatively free of other soil-inhabiting organisms.

This program is designed to minimize contamination of media and production area by plant pests. Some measures such as raised benches and disinfection of water and drainage systems are aimed at minimizing infestations by pests such as nematodes which are invisible to the naked eye but are readily transported via water.

Under this program, it is the approved facility and not the export broker (a broker in the CGMP is defined as an exporter who does not own or operate a facility for producing plants but ships plants produced by approved facilities. Brokers do not receive approval under the CGMP) that is approved.

Scope

This directive is for use by CFIA inspectors, Canada Border Services Agency, National Plant Protection Organizations in other countries, foreign approved facilities, brokers and Canadian importers of plants that will be imported in a soil-less growing medium.

References

[D-08-04](#) - Plant Protection Import Requirements for Plants and Plant Parts for Planting: Preventing the Entry and Spread of Regulated Plant Pests Associated with the Plants for Planting Pathway

[D-95-26](#) - Phytosanitary Requirements for Soil and Related Matter, alone or in association with Plants.

This document supersedes all previous versions of D-96-20.

Definitions, Abbreviations and Acronyms

Definitions for terms used in the present document can be found in the [Plant Health Glossary of Terms](#).

1.0 General Requirements

1.1 Legislative Authority

The Plant Protection Act, S.C. 1990, c 22

The Plant Protection Regulations, SOR/95-212

Canadian Food Inspection Agency Fees Notice, Canada Gazette: Part I (as amended from time to time)

1.2 Fees

The CFIA is charging fees in accordance with the *Canadian Food Inspection Agency Fees Notice*. For information regarding fees associated with imported product, please contact the [National Import Service Centre](#) (NISC). Anyone requiring other information regarding fees may contact any [local CFIA office](#) or visit our [Fees Notice Web Site](#).

1.3 Regulated Pests

The following list names the major soil borne quarantine pests of Canada, for which specific requirements have been developed. This list is not exhaustive and is subject to change.

- Apple maggot, *Rhagoletis pomonella* (Walsh)
- Blueberry maggot, *Rhagoletis mendax* Curran
- Brown rot, *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3, (*Pseudomonas solanacearum*)
- Columbia root-knot nematode, *Meloidogyne chitwoodi* (Golden et. al.)
- Dwarf bunt, *Tilletia controversa* (Kuhn)

- European brown garden snail, *Helix aspersa* Mueller
- Golden nematode, *Globodera rostochiensis* (Woll.)
- Japanese beetle, *Popillia japonica* Newman
- Onion white rot, *Sclerotium cepivorum* (Berk)
- Pale cyst nematode, *Globodera pallida* (Stone) Behrens
- Potato rot nematode, *Ditylenchus destructor* (Thorne)
- Potato smut, *Thecaphora solani* (Barrus)
- Potato wart, *Synchytrium endobioticum* Schlib. (Perc.)
- Sudden Oak Death, *Phytophthora ramorum* (Werres et. al.)

For a more complete list, please refer to the [Pests Regulated by Canada](#) list available on the CFIA website.

1.4 Regulated Commodities

Growing media in which plants, liners, cuttings, slips or seedlings are rooted.

Note: The general requirements for importing rooted or unrooted plants, plant parts, and tissue cultured plants for planting can be [found in policy directive D-08-04](#). Please refer to the list of [Plant Protection Policy Directives](#), available on the CFIA website, for detailed information.

Note: Phytosanitary requirements for soil with or without plants are [described in D-95-26](#).

1.5 Commodities Exempt

- Transparent or translucent aseptic medium for tissue cultured plants.
- Approved packing material (see directive D-08-04 for a list of approved packing material).

1.6 Regulated Areas

All countries and territories including the continental U.S.

2.0 Specific Requirements

Plants and growing media must be free of quarantine pests. Plants originating from all countries are subject to the phytosanitary requirements stipulated in policy directives D-95-26 and D-08-04.

2.1 Non-Manufactured Forest Products (wood products, excluding any wood-based products which have been created using glue, heat, pressure or a combination thereof)

Untreated bark, bark chips, logs, roots, wood, decorative wood and any other non-manufactured forest products are generally prohibited entry into Canada from all countries other than the continental U.S. and additional restrictions and declarations may be required from those regions of the continental U.S. that are regulated. (See policy directive D-02-12).

Specific requirements for the importation of orchids are [found in policy directive D-08-04](#).

2.2 Approved Media

To prevent the introduction of quarantine pests associated with soil, plants rooted in approved media may be imported into Canada from regulated areas if:

2.2.1 The plants originate from an approved facility under the CGMP.

2.2.2 The Canadian importer holds a valid Permit to Import. A copy of a valid Permit to Import must accompany each shipment including evaluation samples (see Appendix 1). The Permit to Import must state the plant genera and the growing medium combination to be imported.

2.2.3 Each shipment must be accompanied by an original Phytosanitary Certificate which indicates the name of the approved facility and contains the following additional declaration:

"The material was produced in conformance with the Canadian Growing Media Program."

If the approved facility is not the exporter, then the name of the approved facility must appear as the producer in the additional declaration on the Phytosanitary Certificate.

2.2.4 The Phytosanitary Certificate lists the plants with their scientific name and their associated growing media.

3.0 Canadian Growing Media Program (CGMP) Production and Facility Requirements

A facility may be approved to export plants to Canada under the CGMP, if the following production requirements are met, and if the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country and CFIA both approve the approved facility. The production and facility requirements are as follows.

3.1 Approved Media Must:

3.1.1 Consist of synthetic or other approved substances (other than soil and related matter) used singly or in combinations. Examples of approved growing media include expanded or baked clay pellets, expanded polystyrene beads, floral foam, ground coconut husk, ground cocoa pods, ground coffee hulls, ground rice husk, peat, perlite, pumice, recycled paper, rock wool, sawdust, sphagnum, styrofoam, synthetic sponge, vermiculite, and volcanic ash or cinder.

3.1.2 Contain only substances that were not used previously for growing plants or other agricultural purposes.

3.1.3 Remain free of, or rendered inherently free of, plant pests.

3.1.4 Remain free of sand and related matter.

3.2 The Approved Facility Must:

3.2.1 Be of a construction that encloses the plant production area (for instance, a rigid construction equipped with insect-proof screening in vents and automatic or self closing double doors at the entry into the facility) or be of a construction specifically approved by the CFIA as appropriate for minimizing pest risk in a specific situation.

3.2.2 Remain free of soil and related matter.

3.2.3 Be isolated from adjoining facilities where soil and related matter is used or stored.

3.2.4 Have raised benches that are high enough above the floor to avoid any pest contamination from the ground or water splashing. CFIA may approve other systems that minimize the risk of pest contamination from the ground or water splashing on a case by case basis.

3.2.5 Have an entry way and floors that can easily be decontaminated as required (for instance, an entry way and floors that are constructed of an impermeable solid material such as cement, ceramic, concrete, steel, tiles). CFIA may approve other entry and floor material on a case by case basis.

3.2.6 Have a drainage system that can be decontaminated as required.

3.3 The Plant Production Procedures Must Involve:

3.3.1 The use of clean water (e.g., treated, disinfected, or heated to eliminate live plant pathogens and invertebrates) during production. Municipal tap water, as long as it has been appropriately treated by the municipality, is acceptable.

3.3.2 Grow plants in a manner that avoids contamination from the floor or structure of the approved facility. This may include production of plants on raised benches where the benches are high enough above the floor to avoid pest contamination from the ground and splashing water, or other production systems approved by the CFIA.

3.3.3 Measures to prevent the entry and establishment of plant pests in growing media and to eliminate plant pests on the plant foliage and in the approved facility.

3.3.4 Pest control products applied to the drainage system area and to the raised benches to prevent the establishment of plant pests in these areas.

3.3.5 The maintenance of the approved facility in a clean state by routine disinfection of floors, benches, handling equipment and tools.

3.3.6 The storage of growing media separately to safeguard from other sources of contamination.

3.3.7 Restricted access to the approved facility to only authorized personnel that are familiar with the program requirements and are aware of the need to follow strict phytosanitary practices.

These procedures apply to all plants intended for export to Canada, and to the propagative stock materials being used for the production of those plants.

3.4 CGMP Approval Process

3.4.1 Approval of New Facilities

3.4.1.1 The exporting facility or the broker must first contact the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country to discuss prior approval procedures or to initiate a review.

3.4.1.2 For each new facility intending to export plants in growing media to Canada, the foreign National Plant Protection Organization shall:

- Inspect the new facility (as per sections 3.2 and 3.3 above) to ensure compliance with the CGMP requirements.
- Collect samples of each plant genus and growing media of each plant genus to be evaluated when performing the inspection to detect the presence of soil and related matter, plant pests and other organisms. A sample must include a minimum of six plants or plantings of a genus intended for export, rooted in a single medium type. The medium-and-roots of the sample must provide a minimum total volume of 300 ml. Each medium/plant-genus combination intended for export must be represented by a separate sample.
- Evaluate the samples to ensure compliance with the CGMP requirements. This evaluation must include an extraction of the sample (both roots and medium) to detect nematodes.
- Recommend (in writing to CFIA) the Facility's eligibility to participate in the CGMP.
- Advise the new facility to contact a Canadian importer before sending representative samples to CFIA for evaluation, once CFIA has accepted the recommendation to evaluate samples.

3.4.1.3 A Canadian importer must apply for and obtain a specific Canadian Permit to Import for the evaluation of samples from the new facility. The Permit to Import must specify which growing media

and plant genera and species the foreign approved facility is intending to send for evaluation and that the samples are being sent to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology. Please refer to Appendix 1 for detailed instructions.

3.4.1.4 Once the Permit to Import for the samples is issued, the new facility sends representative samples to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology for evaluation following the requirements outlined on the Permit to Import and according to the instructions outlined in Appendix 1.

3.4.1.5 CFIA approves new facilities under the CGMP for the purpose of exporting plants rooted in the approved growing medium to Canada if:

- The facility and production procedures are approved by the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country, as having met the production requirements.
- Representative samples submitted to CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology for evaluation must be free of quarantine pests, practically free of other pests, and free of soil, and related matter. The medium must also be relatively free from other soil-inhabiting fauna such as collembolans, copepods, insect larvae, mites, oligochaete, rotifers, tardigrades.
- An original Phytosanitary Certificate accompanies the samples sent to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology and has the required additional declaration (see Section 2.2.3)

3.4.1.6 CFIA advises the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country as to whether the approved facility is approved.

3.4.1.7 Once approved, CFIA adds the new facility to CFIA's list of approved facilities, growing media and plant genera. Access to this list is limited due to the confidential, proprietary information it contains. This list is maintained by CFIA and is only available to CFIA staff on the Intranet (Merlin).

3.4.2 For an Approved Facility to Maintain Approval

The foreign National Plant Protection Organization must inspect the approved facility regularly, not less than twice per year. Conditions in sections 3.2 and 3.3 must continue to be met and only approved growing media can be used for export to Canada.

3.4.3 Approval of a New Growing Medium or a New Plant Genera from an Approved Facility

Each time an approved facility wants to export plants grown in a new medium and / or new plant genera, in an already approved medium or new medium, it must meet the following requirements before commercial shipments may be permitted entry into Canada.

3.4.3.1 For each approved facility intending to export new plant genera and / or plants in a new growing media to Canada, the foreign National Plant Protection Organization shall:

- Sample plants and growing media of each plant genus to be evaluated when performing the inspection to detect the presence of soil and related matter, plant pests and other organisms. Each sample must include a minimum of six plants or plantings of a single new genus intended for export, rooted in one medium type. The medium-and-roots of the sample must provide a minimum total volume of 300 ml. Each growing medium/plant-genus combination intended for export must be represented by a separate sample.
- Evaluate the samples to ensure compliance with the CGMP requirements. This evaluation must include an extraction of the sample (both roots and medium) to detect nematodes.

- Recommend to the CFIA in writing, that the new growing medium/plant-genus combination be approved under the CGMP.
- Advise the approved facility to contact a Canadian importer before sending representative samples to CFIA for evaluation, once CFIA has accepted the recommendation to evaluate samples.

3.4.3.2 A Canadian importer must apply for and obtain a specific Canadian Permit to Import for the evaluation of samples from the approved facility. The Permit to Import must specify which growing media and plant genera and species the foreign approved facility is intending to send for evaluation and indicate that the destination of the samples is the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology. Please refer to Appendix 1 for detailed instructions.

3.4.3.3 Once the Permit to Import for the samples is issued, the approved facility sends representative samples to CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology for evaluation following the requirements outlined on the Permit to Import and according to the instructions outlined in Appendix 1.

3.4.3.4 CFIA advises the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country as to whether the new growing medium is approved.

3.4.3.5 Once approved, CFIA adds the new media and / or new genus to CFIA's list of approved facilities, growing media and plant genera. Access to this list is limited due to the confidential, proprietary information it contains. This list is maintained by CFIA and is only available to CFIA staff on the Intranet (Merlin).

3.5 Inspection Procedures

Shipments of plants in approved media from approved facilities are subject to inspection and audit sampling on arrival to ensure compliance with CGMP requirements, and to verify the absence of plant pests and soil.

3.5.1 For those shipments inspected, CFIA will:

1. Verify that an original Phytosanitary Certificate accompanies the shipment and that the required additional declaration is stated on the certificate. If the approved facility is not the exporter, the approved facility name and address must be indicated as the producer under the additional declaration section, and;
2. Verify that the plants originated from an approved facility and were grown in approved media as listed on CFIA's approved facilities, Growing Media and Plant Genera list. The Plant Health Program maintains this list for CFIA staff;
3. Examine the product for freedom from plant pests, and;
4. Submit plant specimens including growing media to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology according to the instructions outlined in Appendix 2.
5. Release shipments when in compliance with the import requirements. For non-compliance, see Section 3.6.

3.5.2 For shipments of samples for evaluation to obtain approval under the CGMP, CFIA must:

1. Ensure that samples of plants rooted in growing media and shipped to the CFIA Ontario Laboratory - Nematology proceed directly to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology where they will be inspected.

3.6 Non-Compliance

Shipments which do not meet requirements, or are found to be infested with quarantine pests or potential quarantine pests, may be refused entry, returned to origin, or disposed of at the importer's expense. The importer is responsible for any and all costs relating to treatment, disposal, removal or rerouting, including costs incurred by CFIA to monitor the action taken.

The discovery of any quarantine plant pest in the growing medium will result in an immediate suspension of importation from that facility.

Facilities that do not consistently meet the phytosanitary standards and/or that violate any phytosanitary requirement will be suspended from the CGMP. The CFIA will advise the National Plant Protection Organization in the exporting country of pest interceptions and non-compliance with the CGMP.

CFIA may inspect approved facilities on-site, review inspection methods and pest management programs, inspect plants intended for export and stock plants used for propagation, and verify the origin of material shipped to Canada for compliance.

4.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Instructions for Exporting Plant Production Facilities for Submitting Plant Samples with Growing Media to obtain Approval under the CGMP

1. The exporting facility or broker must arrange with a Canadian importer to import the required samples in Canada. The importer must apply for and receive a Permit to Import for the samples from the CFIA. The application form for the Permit to Import must list all the plant genera and growing media sampled and indicate that the shipment contains "*samples for evaluation*". The address of the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology must be included as the destination and the address of both the exporter and the importer must be included.
2. The approved facility must randomly sample plants rooted in growing media of each plant genus to be evaluated. A sample submitted for certification assessment must include a minimum of six plants or plantings of a genus intended for export, rooted in one medium type. The medium-and-roots of the sample must provide a minimum total volume of 300 ml. Each medium/plant-genus combination intended for export must be represented by a separate sample. Exceptions to these submission requirements may be authorized by the Horticulture Section of the CFIA.
3. The specimens must be accompanied by an original Phytosanitary Certificate, issued within 14 days prior to shipping by the plant protection authority in the exporting country. The Phytosanitary Certificate must list all the plant genera and growing media included and must bear the declaration:
"The material was produced in conformance with the Canadian Growing Media Program."
 An additional declaration, indicating the name and address of the approved facility as the production facility, must be included on the Phytosanitary Certificate if the approved facility is not the exporter.
4. Clearly label each plant with its scientific name, as it appears on the accompanying Phytosanitary Certificate.
5. Pack the specimens, taking into account the seasonal conditions in Canada at the time of shipping (sub-zero temperatures between December - April), and include a description of the growing

medium in each package. The description must include the components of the medium and relative proportion of each component on a volume or weight basis (e.g., peat/perlite, 5:1, v/v).

6. The importer must inform the CFIA that samples will be shipped and provide shipping details (i.e., the name of the exporter, flight no., waybill no., and shipment date) at:

Plant Health and Biosecurity Directorate
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
59 Camelot Drive
horticulture@inspection.gc.ca

This will help ensure that shipments be traced to destination upon their arrival in Canada.

7. The approved facility must ship the sample to:

CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
3851 Fallowfield Road
Ottawa, Ontario K2H 8P9
Canada

The samples should proceed directly to the CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology where they will be inspected. An original Phytosanitary Certificate must accompany the samples. All costs associated with importing and routing of samples for assessment will be the responsibility of the Canadian importer.

Please note that two separate Import Permits are required, one for the samples and another for any commercial shipments.

Appendix 2 : Submission of Audit Samples From Consignments Imported Under the CGMP for CFIA Inspectors

1. Sample plants and growing media of each plant genus to be audited. A sample submitted for audit assessment must include a minimum of six plants or plantings of a genus rooted in one medium type. The medium-and-roots of the sample must provide a minimum total volume of 300 ml. Each medium/plant-genus combination must be represented by a separate sample. The plant and roots with growing medium must be submitted intact.
2. The sample must be accompanied by a copy of a Phytosanitary Certificate.
3. Enclose a Pest Identification Report (CFIA/ACIA 1303) listing the plant species submitted with the samples. When the Phytosanitary Certificate identifies a approved facility which is not the exporter, the name of the facility must be added on the Pest Identification Report beside the name of the exporter. This will allow, should a problem be identified with specific samples, to bring it to the attention of the National Plant Protection Organization of the country of origin.
4. Send the samples to the:

CFIA Ottawa Plant Laboratories (Fallowfield) - Nematology
Canadian Food Inspection Agency
3851 Fallowfield Road
Ottawa, Ontario K2H 8P9
Canada