

Procedures and Practices in Plant Quarantine

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1. Organization

Plant Quarantine work is done by Plant Quarantine Division in the Department of Plant Protection, which has the legal authority and management responsibility. The organization arrangements are as per Article IV of the International Plant Protection Convention, 1997. The Head Office is at Karachi and the quarantine stations are located at the sea ports, airports, dry ports and, land border points for the convenience of traders. These are modestly staffed and equipped. The Government of Pakistan is considering establishment of National Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (NAPHIS).

2. Objective

The objective is to protect crop and forest wealth through legislative means and to facilitate trade of plants and plant products.

3. Policy

We are for free; fair and safe trade and we do not use plant quarantine as barrier to trade since we have tolerance in most cases.

4. Principles

The main principles are:

- ⇒ Import from a country where the pests, which are to be guarded against, are either absent or under official control.

Seminar on Quarantine Regulations and WTO-SPS Agreement organized by Export Promotion Bureau in collaboration with Department of Plant Protection held on 24-01-2002 at Regent Plaza, Karachi, Pakistan

- ⇒ Import from a country with an efficient quarantine service.
- ⇒ Obtain a phytosanitary certificate according to Guidelines for phytosanitary certificate (ISPM Publication No.7, FAO, Rome).
- ⇒ Inspect material on arrival and treat as required.
- ⇒ Inspect material prior to exportation and treat where necessary.
- ⇒ Assessment of compliance by the exporters as to pest freedom, treatment, packing and packaging.
- ⇒ Issue a phytosanitary certificate and provide information to the importing country.
- ⇒ Maintain transparency and fair play.
- ⇒ Share information and experience.

5. Enabling Legislation

The working of the plant quarantine division, actions and decisions are according to Pakistan Plant Quarantine Act, 1976 and Rules framed thereunder. The fees charged for plant quarantine services and fines imposed for violation of the regulations are according to SRO 27(I)/97 dated 12-01-1997.

6. Procedure

The plant quarantine division handles 6 to 7 millions tons of plants, plant products and the other material on the import and export side each year. Botanists, entomologists, pathologists and the other related staff do the job. The procedure is presented.

6.1 Documentary Check

The papers such as import permit, certificate of origin, phytosanitary certificate, treatment certificate, bill of lading, invoice, letter of credit, anchorage permit and the other documents, in respect of the consignments

are checked for genuineness and proper entries. Violations and infringements are adequately dealt with.

6.2 Identity Check

The material is checked for identity. It is seen that it is the same as stated in invoice, import permit, phytosanitary certificate, bill of lading and the other accompanying documents. However, there is no liability on the department or its staff for that matter. It is ensured that the material is tradable according to local as well as foreign / international trade law. A positive and negative list published by the Commerce Ministry is consulted invariably.

6.3 Phytosanitary Check

Freedom from quarantine pests and application of suitable treatment if necessary is ascertained. The assessment of compliance by the local exporter is also made.

6.3.1 Inspection

It is carried out in godowns, warehouses, dry ports, and entry and exit points. Shipholds, containers, baggages, and packets in mail are also inspected. The plant and plant products in imports, export or transit are inspected. Propagating material and perishables are given high priority. We have standard sampling and examination methods, which are followed according to the nature and quantity of commodity. Disaster relief goods are prioritized. Items of consumption, and those, which are semi-processed are considered low risk objects. The quarantine inspectors have the necessary kit for the job. The presence of insects, fungi, nematodes etc. is determined and where necessary, species are got confirmed. It is seen that no quarantine pests are transmitted through agricultural trade. The national

pest list, regional pest lists and quarantine pest lists of the trading partners are constantly kept in view.

6.3.2 **Inspection based actions**

On the export side, a phytosanitary certificate is issued if the consignment is free of quarantine pest at the time of inspection and or suitably treated. For the import consignments a release order is issued if the material is free of quarantine pests and or suitably treated. The import consignments refused entry may be sent back or destroyed. Some material may be released after segregation. The treatment of plant products include dry dressing, spraying and fumigation with due care to the operators and the environment.

6.4 **Fees and Fines**

User fees and fines are realized through challans paid into designated banks. The payment of fees and fines by the importers and exporters precedes issuance of a release order or phytosanitary certificate as the case may be.

6.5 **Customs clearance**

This follows inspection and issuance of a release order or phytosanitary certificate (PC) from the plant quarantine service. The staff of Pakistan Customs under the Finance Ministry does it.

6.6 **Records and Communications**

Records of trade, permits, certificates, interceptions, treatments, fees and fines are maintained on files and registers. Interceptions, refused entries,

non-compliance etc. are duly notified. The activities of plant quarantine service are given in the periodical reports of the department and sent to several quarters including FAO.

7. Technical audit and procedure review

This is done periodically and is, in fact, a permanent feature. Its purpose is improvement in plant quarantine operations.

8. Pest surveillance and risk analysis

A small unit for pest surveillance and risk analysis has been set up in the quarantine service at Karachi. The guidelines as contained in ISPM No.2 and 6 of the FAO are followed. The forms for information for pest risk analysis in respect of dates, apples, citrus have been circulated among the prospective foreign exporters and likewise we have provided information on Rice / Paddy, Wheat, Citrus, Mango, Apple, Onion, Potato, and the other crops to Kenya, South Africa, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Philippines and many other countries. There is access to internet. A pest database and pest distribution maps are maintained. The additional conditions in the import permit and additional declaration on the P. C. issued by us are according to the information available.

9. Capacity enhancement measures

The quarantine service has two development projects at hand. Expansion of plant quarantine section project is composed of construction of laboratory, provision of equipment and machinery and training of staff. Another project is Boosting of export of fruits and vegetables with vapor heat treatment. With the completion of these projects the capability of quarantine service will be enhanced.

10. Quarantine protocol establishment

For increasing market access we have proposed establishment of quarantine protocols with several countries including Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka etc. We have good association with all the stakeholders and I request for cooperation and suggests / proposals so that we provide still better service.