# Transit Permits for Plants and Plant Products

Last Modified:

Shipments of plants or plant products that move into or through the United States on the way to another country may require a transit permit.

## Do I Need a Transit Permit?

You need a transit permit if you have plants, plant products, plant pests, or soil in cargo that are:

- Stopping in the United States at a port of entry for loading or landing before reshipping to another country
- Moving through the United States to another country

A transit permit includes specific conditions that must be met during transit. These typically include where and how long the shipment can travel in our country; safeguarding methods (for example, packaging that prevents pests from escaping); and documentation for authorities like U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

## Commodities That Do Not Need a Permit

- Nonregulated lumber from Canada except for pine and ash lumber with bark attached
- Cut flowers
    - Admissible cut flowers do not have botanical fruit attached and do not require a phytosanitary certificate for entry.
- APHIS-precleared shipments with an original and valid APHIS-issued Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Form 203.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables grown in Canada for consumption, **except**:
    - Fresh *Allium* bulbs, *Ipomoea aquatica* (water spinach), corn-on-the-cob, and potatoes
- Frozen fruit and vegetables grown in Canada
- Grain harvested in Canada, except:
    - Corn and corn relatives, such as sorghum, millet, *Pennisetum*
    - Grain from other sources that require an import permit or certification
- Fully processed articles for consumption (for example: milled flour, roasted coffee)
- Agricultural or vegetable seed from Canada, except seeds that requires an import permit or certification
- Cargo moving with an Emergency Action Notice
- Residue cargo moving by sea or air if the commodity is admissible to the United States without treatment and has no entry restrictions

See More See Less

## Apply for a Transit Permit

Log in to eFile

APHIS eFile is the online system to apply for and receive import and transit permits for plants, plant pests, soil, and agricultural products.

If you are a first-time user, create an eFile account. You will be asked to provide your Social Security number and U.S. address to use the online system.

If you are not a U.S. citizen or do not have a Social Security number, you may apply for a transit permit by completing and emailing PPQ Form 586 (42.25 KB) to ppq.transit.permits@usda.gov

# More Information About Transit Permits

Expand All

Transit Application Process

1. Submit your transit application in eFile. If you cannot apply using eFile, complete and email PPQ Form 586 (42.25 KB) to ppq.transit.permits@usda.gov.
2. We'll review your application and apply safeguarding measures before the operations feasibility review.
3. You will receive an email response. We will either:
    - Approve your application,
    - Approve your application with modifications, or
    - Deny your application.
4. If approved, then review and sign the draft permit conditions and return them to ppq.transit.permits@usda.gov.
5. APHIS then issues the transit permit.

**About Transit Permit Conditions**

The conditions included in an APHIS transit permit allow the shipment to move through the United States while minimizing risks to our country's agriculture and natural resources.

When developing conditions for transit permits, we consider the following factors:

- Nature and habits of the plant pests known or likely to be present with the plants or plant products
- Nature of the plants or plant products
- Container and packaging, including their adequacy to prevent plant pest dissemination
- Climatic conditions and availability of refrigeration
- Routing and pending exportation
- Presence or likely presence of soil
- Construction or physical condition of container and type of carrier
- Availability of treatment, incineration, or other destruction facilities
- Availability of transportation facilities for immediate exportation
- Temporary storage area needs and availability

- Other issues that may be specific to the shipment or commodity

Frequently Asked Questions

**How long does it take for APHIS to issue a transit permit?**
Submit your transit application at least 60 days before your shipment is scheduled to arrive in the United States. APHIS eFile allows you to apply as early as 120 days prior.

**Who should apply for the transit permit?**
The legal or physical custodian(s) of the shipments transiting the United States should apply for the transit permit.

**Do shipments moving under Customs bond as in-transit cargo or as residue cargo require an APHIS transit permit?**
Residue cargo is covered by other authorities. Shipments moving under Customs bond as in-transit cargo often require an APHIS import permit instead of a transit permit.

If you are unsure about which permit to apply for, apply for a transit permit (PPQ Form 586) first. APHIS will review the information and advise if you need an import permit instead.

**Does packaging material with my shipments transiting the United States to Canada or Mexico need to be compliant with ISPM 15 treatment and marking requirements?**
Yes. APHIS will refuse transit on shipments to Canada and Mexico with noncompliant packaging material. Both countries implemented regulations, policy, or both in support of ISPM 15.

**Do I need to apply for a transit permit for every shipment?**
APHIS often issues transit permits for multiple years to cover multiple shipments. Our decisions are based on the situations outlined in the permit application.

**How much does a transit permit cost?**
There is no charge for APHIS transit permits.

# Questions?

For help with transit permits (PPQ Form 586):

Transit Permits Team

Email: ppq.transit.permits@usda.gov

Phone: 877-770-5990

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