

WORK PLAN FOR THE EXPORT OF FRESH FRUIT OF Highbush Blueberries of the SPECIES *Vaccinium corymbosum L.*, *Vaccinium virgatum*, and *V. corymbosum hybrids* FROM THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE PHILIPPINES

effective May 25, 2020

I. PRODUCT INCLUDED

Highbush Blueberries of the Species (*Vaccinium corymbosum L.*, *Vaccinium virgatum*, and *V. corymbosum* hybrids)

II. QUARANTINE PEST

Drosophila suzukii Matsumura (Spotted Wing Drosophila)

III. COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

For the Philippines:

Bureau of Plant Industry
Philippine Department of Agriculture

For the United States of America:

Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

IV. COOPERATION AGREEMENT

Plant Quarantine Officers from BPI-NPQSD be sent to USA, prior to or during the first season of the export of US blueberries to the Philippines, to confirm the implementation of pre-shipment activities and to verify the whole export process. All expenses associated with the audit prior to or during the first season of the export and other actions to meet import requirement will be paid by the exporting sector of USA.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. USDA - APHIS

1. Provide oversight and coordination and coordination for the export program, especially during BPI audit activities.
2. Verify that eligible producers, packing houses and exporters are compliant with the requirements of this agreement.

B. Bureau of Plant Industry

1. Provide and maintain a Work Plan for the Program.
2. Verify that the responsibilities of all participants are appropriately conducted.
3. Provide timely notification to USDA – APHIS of the detection of any quarantine pest found during the import inspection of US blueberries including information from the label on the export carton, to facilitate trace back to the supplying orchard.

C. Exporting Sector

1. Comply with all the requirements of the work plan and applicable regulations.
2. Ensure that all producers know and respect the provisions in the Work Plan.
3. Ensure that rejected fruits (culled) inside or outside the facilities are removed and disposed properly.
4. Ensure cleanliness and sanitation in packing houses at all times.
5. Be responsible for quality inspections.

VI. TRACEABILITY

Production and packing facilities will not require registration because current production practices in the U.S. allow for the tracking of shipments. Each carton for export to the Philippines should bear traceability codes.

VII. REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS FOR ENTRY

1. Monitoring traps for Spotted Wing Drosophila (SWD) should be placed on the places of production where fresh blueberries will be sourced for export to the Philippines. The results of SWD monitoring will be used to time the initial application of SWD controls in the places of production where fresh blueberries will be sourced for export to the Philippines. Alternatively, SWD controls will be applied as soon as fruit is susceptible. Information on the prophylactic controls used shall be made available upon request to BPI.
2. SWD Monitoring data and records of chemical controls applied for SWD will be maintained for production fields where fresh blueberries will be sourced for export to the Philippines, and will be made available upon request to BPI during on-site audits.
3. Fresh blueberries for export to the Philippines should be hand harvested.

4. Fruit extraction method (salt and water test or sugar and water test), to determine the presence of SWD, should be conducted first for every truckload of blueberries delivered in the packing facilities.
5. Only the batch with negative result in the test will be processed for export.
6. Packing houses processing blueberries fruit for export to the Philippines should be kept clean and free from pests, plant parts/debris and they shall ensure that the fruits will not be mixed with other fruits destined to other countries.
7. Fresh blueberries should be cooled upon arrival at the packing facility to remove field heat and will be chilled immediately after packing to a temperature of 35 F or less which should be maintained during storage and shipping of fruits.
8. Fresh blueberries should pass the mechanical soft sorters to ensure that soft fruits will be removed. Afterwards, hand sorting should be conducted. Fruits with poor quality should be discarded and removed from the lot
9. The fruit shall undergo pre-export quarantine inspection by USDA authorized representative at the packing house.
10. All blueberries for export should be inspected, cleaned and packed in new carton boxes. All boxes should be properly labeled with the name of the packing house, the grower lot number, and country of origin. The label is to be placed on conspicuous area of the box.
11. Packed fruits should be kept in clean holding areas, properly labeled with "For the Philippines" and separated from others intended for other destination.
12. The transport vehicles should be insect proof, and if not, the fruits in boxes and/or pallets should be covered with insect proof mesh to prevent re-infestation of certified fruits.
13. USDA officials or their authorized representative shall be responsible for pre-export inspection and supervision in compliance with the pre-export conditions.

VIII. PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION

A phytosanitary certificate issued by US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) or their authorized representative is required for each shipment with the additional declaration stating that:

“The blueberry fruits are exported in compliance with the conditions stated in the work plan for export. These have been inspected and are found to be free from quarantine pests”.

IX. MAXIMUM RESIDUE LIMIT (MRL)

Each consignment must comply with the Philippines Food Safety Act of 2013. Each producer must be engaged in compliance with Global GAP or Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) equivalent standards and compliance with marketing authorizations for the pesticides used, via specifications. Each packinghouse will provide a certificate attesting that all producers of blueberry are under Global G.A.P. certification and thus respect the CODEX or US MRLs standards.

X. ENTRY AND POST ENTRY ACTIVITIES

The Philippine National Plant Quarantine Service shall undertake the following phytosanitary activities upon arrival of each shipment.

1. The designated port of entry in the Philippines shall only be in the Ports of Manila, Cebu, and Davao.
2. Plant Quarantine Officers (PQOs) at the ports of entry should verify the authenticity of the accompanying documents (SPS Import Clearance, Phytosanitary Certificate). Container vans should be sealed and will be opened only with the presence of PQOs at the port of entry of the Philippines.
3. During inspection, samples shall be taken from the consignment to monitor and analyze the residue of the registered/recommended pesticide used in pre and post-harvest treatment. It shall be conducted at the BPI – Plant Product Safety Services Division, for the entire duration of export program. If the pesticide level found on the consignment is not within the standards set for the pesticide level in fruits, the shipment shall be rejected.
4. Consignments with complete documents shall be subjected to five to ten percent (5-10%) ocular inspection. If disease symptoms and insects are observed during ocular inspection, samples should be obtained and brought to the laboratory for further analysis/diagnosis. No consignment shall be released pending results of the analysis.
5. The interception of a quarantine pest, including those identified in this PRA and other pests of quarantine importance, shall result in immediate suspension by APHIS and BPI-NPQSD of the supplying orchard for the remaining of the export season. The supplying packing house shall be suspended pending the results of an

investigation by APHIS. The suspension may be removed and export from that packing facility may resume upon confirmation of the successful implementation of any identified corrective actions. The BPI – NPQSD reserves the right to suspend the export program and will conduct an audit of the USA management systems in cases of continuous interception of quarantine pests and non-compliance of the requirements. In the event of continuous detections of quarantine pests in blueberries produced in an individual state (or states), these actions will initially be limited to the production state (or states) from which infested fruits originated. The program will resume once BPI – NPQSD is satisfied with the corrective actions undertaken.

6. Consignments found to be non-compliant with the requirements (lacking the necessary documents i.e., SPS Import Clearance and Phytosanitary Certificate) or found infested/infected with quarantine pests will be re-exported, or returned to origin.

XI. NON – COMPLIANCE AND RESULTING ACTIONS

Cases of non-compliance/deliberate or intentional violation of any of the terms and conditions of this work plan, quarantine pests interceptions at the port of entry and/or a pest outbreak in origin shall constitute valid reasons to suspend this work plan for export of fresh US blueberries to the Philippines, or to re-examine the implementation of these procedures and to amend them, as per the terms stated in the workplan relative to the implementation of sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

XII. AUDIT OF EXPORT PROCEDURES

1. In the event of continuous interceptions of quarantine pests or non – compliance with these requirements, or in the event that a problem or situation of mutual concern is identified, the BPI-NPQSD will conduct audit of USA export program and the phytosanitary measures implemented to ensure that the processing system is within the standards. Audit will aim at reviewing export processes and operations and consulting USDA and Industry Operators on fresh blueberry fruits.
2. In the event of a suspension under No. IX of this work plan, BPI may audit procedures in USA, prior to decision being taken on resumption of exports. All BPI costs including per diem allowance will be provided by the exporter or USA through arrangement with USDA.

XIII. COMING INTO FORCE

This work plan will come into effect at the date of signing and will be valid until terminated in writing by either party. Termination of the work plan will be effective three months after the receipt of notification.

XIV. MODIFICATONS

BPI NPQSD will modify import requirements in case of emergency when unacceptably high incidences of quarantine pests are recorded during the season. Management practices will be reviewed in order to evaluate the efficiency of pre established measures to reduce pest occurrence. Upon agreement between USDA APHIS and BPI NPQSD, additional measures and review of existing ones maybe required

If mutually agreed, the parties may cooperatively modify this work plan as required, and the modifications shall take effect on the day of occurrence.

XV. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

All plant protection standard issues will be resolved by technical specialists proposed by both countries. Any disagreements in the interpretation or execution of this work plan will be resolved amicably between the parties through official technical channels.