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# About Plant Protection and Quarantine

Last Modified:

APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine program forms America's first line of defense against the introduction and spread of invasive pests. Our team of more than 3,000 employees has expertise in a wide range of fields, from botany and virology to data analysis, economics, and much more.

Throughout the United States and abroad, we safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources against the entry, establishment, and spread of economically and environmentally significant pests and facilitate the safe trade of agricultural products. We collaborate with many partners, cooperators, and stakeholders to carry out this mission. Below are two of our most crucial partnerships:

## [Customs and Border Protection](#)

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's **Customs and Border Protection** enforces APHIS regulations at ports of entry. See our Memorandum of Agreement.

[Learn More](#)



### [National Plant Board](#)

PPQ and the **National Plant Board** work together to use our respective Federal and State authorities, assets, and expertise to safeguard plant health and enable safe trade. The Strategic Alliance documents the nature of this relationship and our top priorities.

[Learn More](#)



Globally, PPQ represents the United States at the [International Plant Protection Convention](#), where we work with more than 180 other countries to develop science-based international standards. Through the [North American Plant Protection Organization](#), we also collaborate with Canada and Mexico to create regional standards that keep invasive plant pests out of North America.

#### [PPQ Deputy Administrator's Safeguarding Award and Safe Trade Award](#)

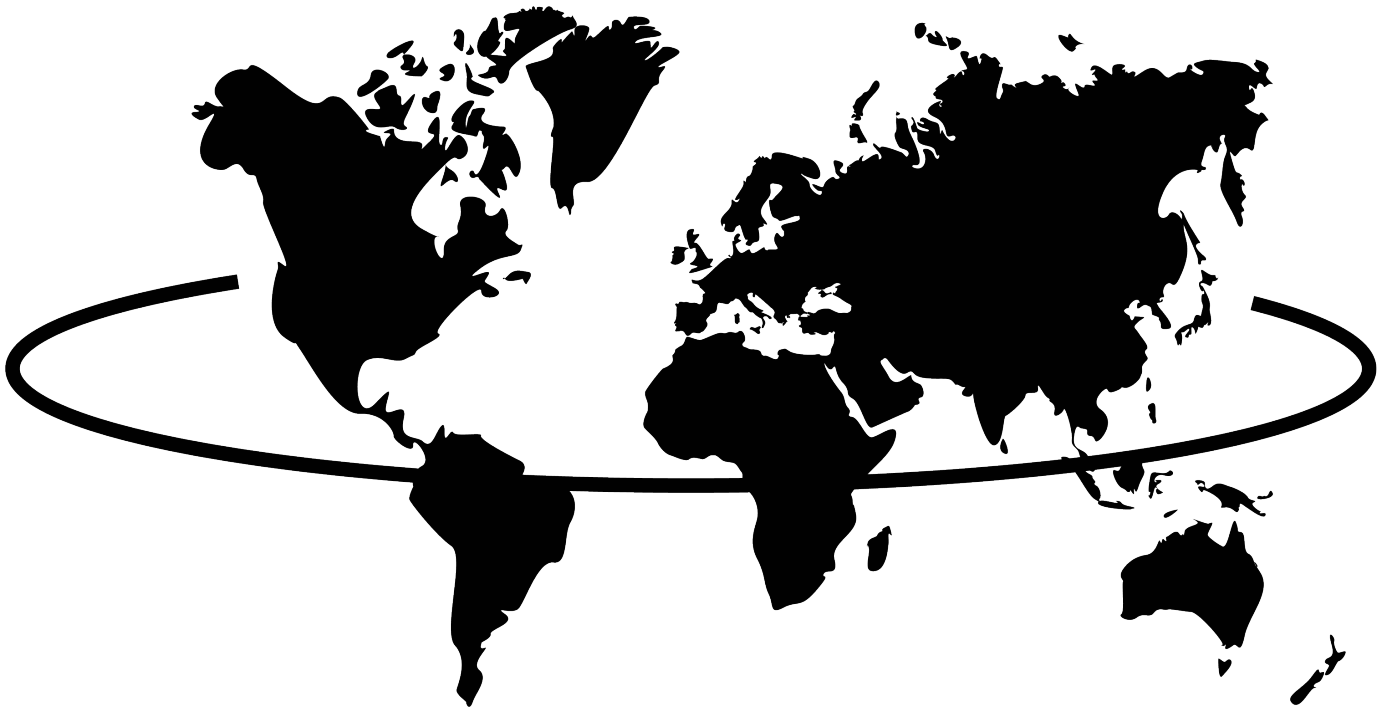
The PPQ Deputy Administrator's Safeguarding Award and Safe Trade Award recognize outstanding initiatives and innovations that protect American agriculture and plant resources.

[Learn More](#)



## Accomplishments

All along [the safeguarding continuum](#) (103.27 KB), PPQ experts assess risks associated with pests that hitchhike on and in the agricultural products we import. We take action at the right time and in the right place to safeguard U.S. agriculture and natural resources, while keeping international trade and travel moving. Take a look at [our work from 2024](#) (256.18 KB):



## Around the World

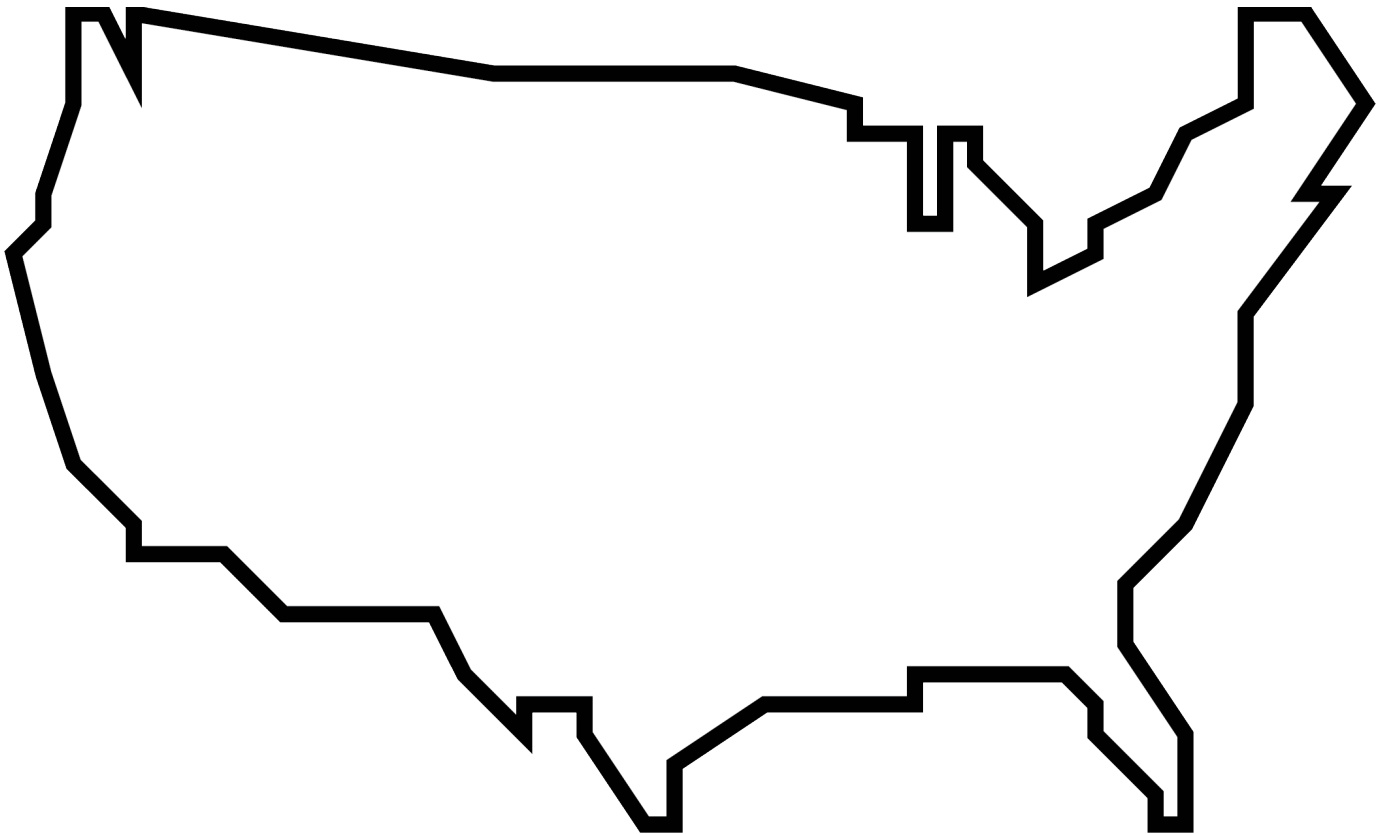
We fought pests offshore before they could reach the United States and helped U.S. agriculture thrive in the global marketplace.

- Inspected and cleared **4.9 billion** pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables from **19** countries before they were shipped to the United States and oversaw a systems approach for the safe import of **2.2 billion** pounds of avocados in Mexico
- Conducted technical negotiations to open, maintain, and expand export markets; and facilitated the release of held shipments—an added value of approximately **\$459.3 million**
- Certified or recertified **190** treatment facilities, including **83** facilities in Mexico, **6** facilities in Central America, **6** facilities in the Caribbean, **88** facilities in South America, and **7** facilities in Asia
- Processed **2.7 million** Lacey Act declarations, helping to combat illegal trade of protected plant species

Learn more in our program reports:

- [The Lacey Act: Combating the Illegal Trade of Protected Plant Species](#) (187.48 KB)

- [Making Agricultural Trade Safe and Supporting U.S. Exports](#) (292.42 KB)
- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (194 KB)
- [Strengthening Pest Exclusion Abroad](#) (229.68 KB)



# At the Border

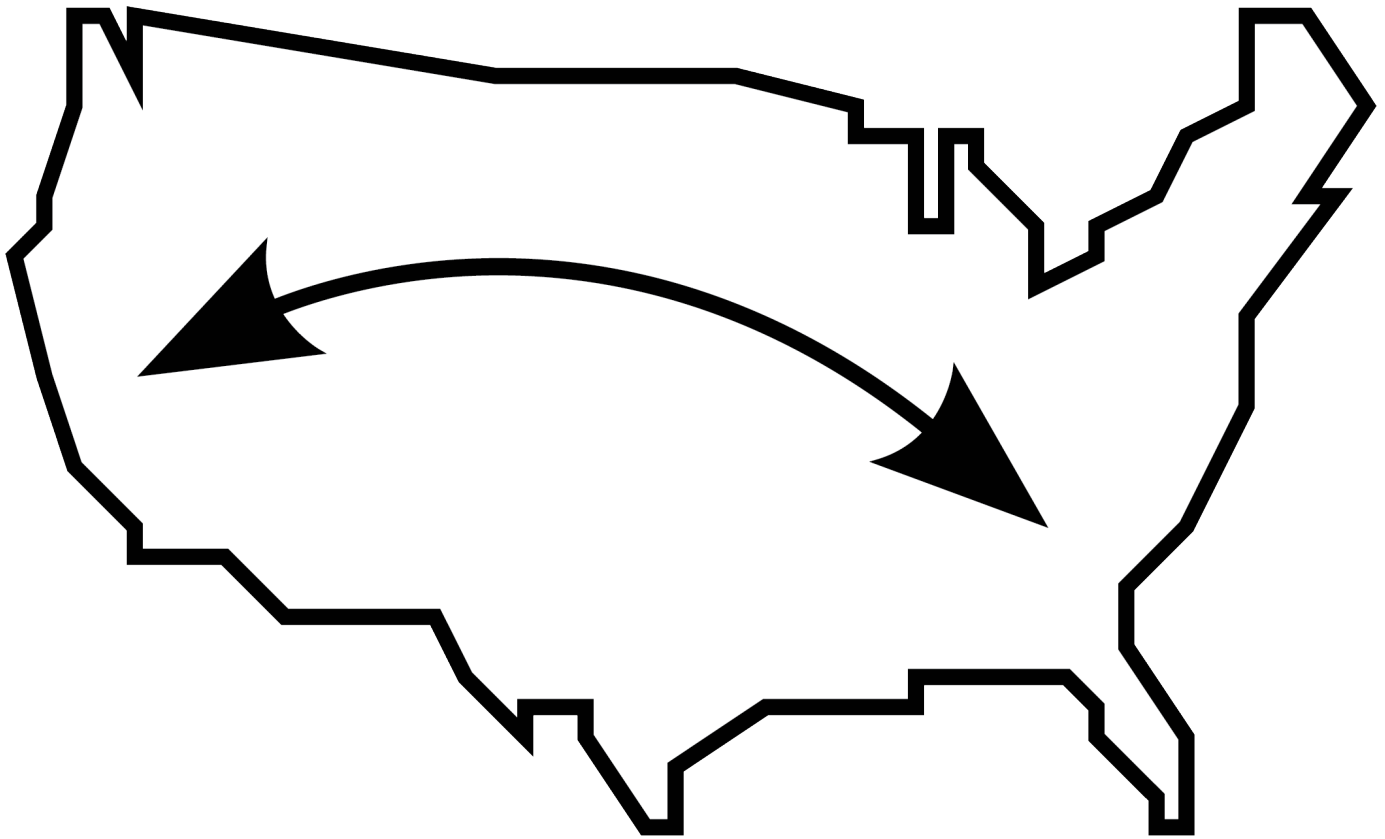
We kept potentially damaging plant pests out of the country.

- Cleared **26,813** shipments containing over **1.8 billion** plant units and **584,887 kilograms** of woody seeds, intercepting **1,830** quarantine-significant pests at plant inspection stations
- Identified approximately **61,313** pests found during U.S. Customs and Border Protection inspections of cargo, mail, and express carrier shipments and took quick action to prevent those of concern from entering the United States
- Facilitated entry of regulated agricultural cargo through the monitoring of **13,775** fumigations, **42,521** cold treatments, **6,862** irradiation certifications, and **163** heat treatments of niger seed
- Intercepted over **289,855** prohibited agricultural products and **3,008** quarantine pests during baggage inspections of approximately **16.7 million** passengers bound for the U.S. mainland from Hawaii and Puerto Rico

Learn more in our program reports:

- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (194 KB)
- [Strengthening Pest Exclusion at the Border](#) (298.89 KB)





## Across the Nation

We fought back against the spread of invasive plant pests that threatened our Nation's crops and forests.

- Removed nearly **36,892** acres from Karnal bunt-regulated areas on Tribal and non-Tribal lands in Arizona
- Conducted **202** plant pest surveys with cooperators in **50** States and **4** Territories and coordinated the response to approximately **45** pests detected in 2024 and prior years
- Provided nearly **\$3** million for projects in Florida and Texas that help give citrus growers proven, science-based strategies to combat citrus greening
- Issued more than **663,000** Federal phytosanitary (plant health) certificates directly or through authorized State and county cooperators to aid the export of U.S. plants and plant products to approximately **200** trading partners

Learn more in our program reports:

- [Optimizing Pest Management: Cotton Pests](#) (192.51 KB)

- [Optimizing Pest Management: Field Crop and Rangeland Ecosystem Pests](#) (237.4 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Specialty Crop Pests](#) (320.29 KB)
- [Optimizing Pest Management: Tree and Wood Pests](#) (201.3 KB)
- [Pest Detection](#) (188.76 KB)
- [Risk Analysis and Methods Development](#) (194 KB)



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