

Handling post entry quarantine stock - A quick guide for importers

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Post entry quarantine is a method of reducing pests and diseases imported on nursery stock from outside the US. The quarantine requires that certain plants from certain countries be held in quarantine and inspected by either state or federal officials for two years after importation. This period is required because plant disease symptoms caused by viruses, bacteria, and fungi do not necessarily appear in the same season.

Upon receiving post entry quarantine plant material, make sure the shipment has the yellow post entry tags and the paperwork generated at the USDA Plant Inspection Station. If these are not included with the shipment, do not plant, graft or increase the plant material, and contact your state inspector and USDA immediately.

If the shipment contains the proper paperwork and tags, place the plants in the post entry planting site pre-approved by your state inspector. This site must be separated from domestic stock of the same genus and from any other imported stock by no less than three meters (approximately 10 feet).

During the quarantine period, the plants may not be increased by cuttings, grafting, suckers, flowers, seed or air layering; there will be no distribution of the plants or increase; and no cutting of flowers for sale will be made until the plants are released from post entry quarantine, or written permission is obtained from USDA/APHIS.

Should any of the plants die, the state inspector should be notified immediately by phone, and in writing within 30 days. Dead plants will be retained and collected by the inspector for analysis. Disposal procedures are as follows:

- Notify in writing the state (or federal) inspectors within 30 days of when PEQ material dies or appears infected or infested.
- Save all dead PEQ material in plastic trash bags. (PEQ material may be beyond recognition when an inspection is later conducted, but safeguarding in plastic bags will reduce the likelihood of pest dissemination.)
- Never dispose of PEQ material without prior approval of a state or federal inspector. If dead plants or evidence of disease appears contact the state inspector immediately. Or, if elimination of undesirable plants is necessary, contact the inspector before roguing out those plants.
- Any and all debris or waste that is derived from post entry plants or plant parts must be burned, autoclaved, or buried at least 1.5 to 2 feet deep. These would include:
 - Undesirable plants that the grower wants to eliminate
 - The debris remaining after pruning
 - The excess wood left from bud grafting
 - Debris that collects naturally.

Composting waste or debris from post-entered plants or carrying waste or debris from post-entered plants to a public landfill is prohibited.

Once the material has been inspected at least twice by the state inspector, in the proper season, it will be released from quarantine. When you receive the paperwork releasing the plants from quarantine, it may be moved, propagated, or sold, but only after the release paperwork is received.

For FAQ's regarding post entry quarantine plant material or to apply for a permit, you may call your state inspector, or look on-line at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/permits/plantproducts/postentry.html>.