

# AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AND THE PREVENTION OF PEST CONTAMINATION

MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company would like to remind our Supply Chain Partners of our commitment to agricultural security and the prevention of pest contamination within the international containerized cargo supply chain.

**Background:** In alignment with the U.S. Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (CTPAT) program and guidance from various international and national agencies—including U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Australian Department of Agriculture, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)—MSC emphasizes the importance of mitigating biosecurity risks associated with pest contamination. This includes contamination of containerized cargo and wood packaging materials (WPM), which can pose significant threats to agricultural ecosystems and disrupt global trade operations.

## PURPOSE

This communication aims to raise awareness across the supply chain regarding the **critical importance of identifying and reducing pest risks**. By implementing recommended practices at key interchange points, we can collectively:

- Prevent the spread of invasive pests.
- Facilitate smoother and faster container inspections by relevant authorities.
- Support global biosecurity efforts.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Container and cargo contamination can occur for many reasons such as: origin, season, biology of pests, conditions around packing, storage of handling areas, intermodal parking areas, lights that attract insects, environment factors (wind, rain) and packing procedures (transient pests and previous cargo).
2. At supply chain interchange points, such as container depots (gate in/gate out), packing location (upon arrival, during packing, when packing is complete), transfer of units full and mt units, export/import terminals when gate in/gate out and transshipment (when loading/unloading to/from ship) and finally upon arrival/during unpacking and before to returning mt units to depots.

3. The industry can be directly affected in respect to delays for cargo release (quarantine), demurrage charges due to cargo holds, extra handlings and drayage and/or cross stuffing when necessary, cleaning / fumigation process, possible re-export charges and/or cancelling future deliveries, loss of business.
4. A global concern, and a matter of shared responsibility, by highlighting the importance of the role through collaboration and partnership with authorities with the goal of awareness, to prevent and to maximize the communication a preventive action by each stakeholder.
5. All industry participants need to be aware of the risk of penalties for not complying with biosecurity requirements for the individuals involved, which will vary and can be most serious. Enforcement agencies can issue an Infringement Notice, enforceable undertaking, injunction, civil penalty order and any combination of or all these options. The most serious offences can lead to criminal prosecution and disqualification from engaging in any conduct that may be conducive to biosecurity.

## KEY MEASURES TO FOLLOW AT INTERCHANGE POINTS

1. During Gate in of an Empty container, the inspection for pest contamination must be performed by the depot's surveyor along with the repair and cleaning examination. Both the interior and exterior of the container must be scrutinized.
2. During Gate in of a Full container, the inspection for pest contamination must be performed by the depot's clerk on the exterior of the container.
3. Once Repaired and/or cleaned, all the necessary precautions must be taken to prevent a re-contamination. They must be stored with doors closed on a well paved area i.e. not on grassy ground or soil, away from any stacking water, any other unclean containers, far from vegetation and not under bright lights, which can attract insects.
4. During Gate Out of an empty container, the truck driver has the responsibility to perform an internal and external check of the container to make sure it is free of any pest contaminants. The mention "Pest contaminant Free" must be clearly specified on the EIR issued by the depot.
5. During Gate Out of a full container, the truck driver has the responsibility to perform an external check to make sure the container is free of any pest contaminants. The mention "Pest contaminant Free" must be clearly specified on the EIR issued by the depot.

*Pest Examples*



## BEST PRACTICES & RECOMMENDATIONS

The mitigation techniques listed below are best practices in protecting against contaminants, however, do not fully guarantee that shipments, containers and cargo will remain free from contaminants. It is up to each entity which forms part of the supply chain to ensure that they are adhering to agricultural pest and contaminants requirements, by following the rules of each country and/or port destination

1. Ensure conveyance is clean before loading / stuffing.
2. Keep vegetation near facilities mowed, as these areas can harbor insects and rodents.
3. Sweep, vacuum, wash the containers and trailers prior to stuffing / loading.
4. Properly store and cover the pallets, dunnage, crates etc.
5. Store trailers / Containers away from natural areas and/or avoid placing over soil or vegetation.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following links provide the directives and/or guidelines:

- International Plant Protection Convention: <https://www.ippc.int>
- USA: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov>
- FAO: <https://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020>
- CFIA: <https://www.inspection.gc.ca>