



June 3, 2020

Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service (APHIS)

Plant Protection and  
Quarantine (PPQ)

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Ing. Porfirio Alvarez Fernandez  
Director Departamento de Sanidad Vegetal  
Ministerio de Agricultura (MAG)  
Urbanización Los Jardines,  
Km 6 ½ Autopista Duarte Santo Domingo,  
República Dominicana

Dear Porfirio Alvarez:

APHIS is writing to notify you of the enclosed Federal Order (DA 2020-12) dated June 3, 2020, which amends our import requirements for the plants for planting (plants, cuttings, grafts, and seed) of tomato and pepper from all countries; and the fruit of tomato and pepper from Canada, Dominican Republic, France, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Spain.

These commodities are hosts of Tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV). ToBRFV is a recently described member of the *Tobamovirus* genus that infect vegetable crops, including Tobacco mosaic virus (TMV), Tomato mosaic virus (ToMV), and Cucumber green mottle mosaic virus (CGMMV).

Tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*) and pepper (*Capsicum* spp.) are the two main hosts of Tobamoviruses. Tobamoviruses are spread locally by contact (direct plant to plant contact, contaminated tools, hands, or clothing) as well as being borne by seeds. ToBRFV can remain viable in seeds, plant debris, and contaminated soil for months. Foliar symptoms include chlorosis, mosaic, and mottling. Necrotic spots may appear on peduncles, calyces, and petioles. Fruit show yellow or brown spots, with rugose symptoms rendering the fruits non-marketable.

#### **Requirements for Propagative Material**

Effective June 5, 2020 APHIS will require that lots of *S. lycopersicum* and *Capsicum* spp. plants for planting (including seeds) from all countries must be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) or a re-export Phytosanitary Certificate. Refer to the enclosed Federal Order for additional information regarding obscured seed and small seed lots. The PC must also have stated either of the additional declarations below:

- The *Solanum lycopersicum* and/or *Capsicum* spp. plants for planting or seeds originated from a country certified free from Tomato brown rugose fruit virus, as established by the national plant protection organization of that country;

**OR**

- A representative sample of the *Solanum lycopersicum* and/or *Capsicum* spp. plants for planting or seed lot has been officially tested and found free of Tomato brown rugose virus.

### **Requirements for Fresh Fruit**

Also effective on June 5, 2020 APHIS will allow only commercial shipments of tomato fruit and pepper fruit to be imported into the United States. Commercial shipments from Dominican Republic, France, Israel, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Spain must be imported under permit and also be accompanied by:

- A phytosanitary certificate issued by the National Plant Protection Organization of the country of origin containing the following declaration: “The *Solanum lycopersicum* and/or *Capsicum* spp. fruit have been inspected and been found to be free of symptoms of Tomato brown rugose virus”.

**OR**

- An inspection certification document issued by the grower or packer with the following language, in lieu of a phytosanitary certificate: “The *Solanum lycopersicum* and/or *Capsicum* spp. fruit have been inspected and been found to be free of symptoms of Tomato brown rugose virus”.
  - The inspection certificate must include the name, title, office, and address of the person issuing the inspection certificate as well as the names of addresses of the grower(s) and packinghouse(s).

Although ToBRFV has not been reported in Canada, because Canada imports tomato and pepper fruit from Mexico that are re-exported to the United States, APHIS will also require tomato and pepper fruit from Canada to be inspected at the point of origin to ensure it is free of disease symptoms and certified by either document listed above.

We appreciate your cooperation in complying with these new entry requirements for the seed, plants for planting, and fruit of tomato and pepper.

Should you have questions, APHIS has included the Federal Order as an enclosure to this letter. You are also welcome to contact the Phytosanitary Issues Management unit by replying to this letter.

Sincerely,



Andrea B. Simao  
Assistant Deputy Administrator  
Phytosanitary Issues Management  
Office of the Deputy Administrator

*Enclosure (1)*