

The Pitch & Needle

September 2007



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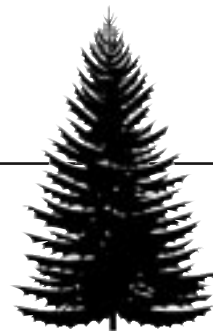
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About this newsletter

The Pitch & Needle is a semi-annual publication of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and is intended as an aid to anyone involved in the growing and shipping of Christmas trees. Through this bulletin, we hope to provide you with the most current shipping information as well as other topical information related to the Christmas tree industry. If you have any suggestions for topics or articles for the next issue, contact Gary McAninch at 503-986-4644 or e-mail <gmcaninc@oda.state.or.us>.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this publication will be made available in alternate formats.

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2007 Christmas tree certification requirements for shipments to states and territories of the United States

Below is a summary of requirements to ship cut Christmas trees to states and territories of the United States, and to selected foreign countries. Inspections and certifications are provided by Oregon Department of Agriculture personnel. Review the information in the summary and contact the department to arrange field inspections prior to harvest and certification. Please provide at least five (5) days notice before the actual shipping date when requesting certificates. Requests need to be scheduled as far in advance as possible. Destination shipping requirements are subject to change.

Christmas tree brokers must submit, to the Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Division, a list of all growers and growing locations from which Christmas tree harvest and shipping will occur.

All states

All bills of lading, invoices, and bills of sale should bear county of origin, as well as, the name and address of the shipper. All shipments of Christmas trees grown in Oregon are required by Oregon law to be accompanied by a shipping permit.

Arizona

Oregon Christmas tree shipping permit required. The Arizona Department of Agriculture will inspect all trucks as they enter the state (including transit shipments). If pests are found, the shipment will be held at the border station pending identification. The Arizona Department of Agriculture estimates a four-hour turn-around on pest identification during business hours. Trucks arriving after business hours may be held until the next business day. Trucks arriving Friday afternoon or over the weekend may be held until identification can be made the following week. Any pest found, that is named on Arizona's quarantine list, is cause for shipment rejection.

Arizona law requires all trucking companies participating in the "pre-pass" program and carrying agricultural products to stop at Arizona weigh stations.

California

1. County of origin and species of Christmas tree (Douglas fir, Scotch pine, etc.) must appear on shipping documents. Mail-order Christmas trees shipped to customers in California, via US Mail, UPS, Federal Express, etc., must have the county of origin and species of Christmas tree clearly marked on the outside of each shipping carton. The best location for the county of origin is on the shipping label or adjacent to the label.



2. All shipments that include pine species destined for California must be accompanied by a European pine shoot moth (EPSM) certificate. These certificates are only available for growing grounds that have been trapped during the 2007 trapping season. Contact your area horticulturist for additional information. Only certificates dated 6/1/07 to 5/31/08 are valid and may be obtained for eligible growing locations by calling the department horticulturist for your area at 503-986-4644.
3. Shipments of EPSM uncertified pine Christmas trees may be shipped through California to other states provided the name and complete address of the consignee are present on the invoice, bill of sale, or bill of lading and the Christmas trees are shipped in a closed van (open trucks or trailers will not be allowed to pass through California if the shipment includes uncertified pine). Note: pine Christmas trees must also be accompanied by a cereal leaf beetle certificate.
4. Cereal leaf beetle certification is required for Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), red pine (*Pinus resinosa*), and Austrian pine (*Pinus nigra*). Any of these trees originating in infested Oregon counties (Baker, Benton, Clackamas, Columbia, Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Lane, Linn, Malheur, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Washington, and Yamhill) are prohibited from shipment into California unless they are treated and certified before shipment. Regulated articles coming from uninfested counties must be certified by the Oregon Department of Agriculture as to origin before the shipment is made. Regulated pine species originating from infested counties may be shipped through California to other states when accompanied by a "Cereal Leaf Beetle Statement of Transit Compliance Agreement." Requests for certification should be directed to the ODA's Plant Division, 503-986-4644.
5. Pine boughs in wreaths are exempt.

Delaware

Oregon Christmas tree shipping permit is required.

Florida

Signed compliance agreement with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. See attached memo entitled, "European Brown Garden Snail Compliance Agreement." The deadline for signing and returning the compliance agreement to the Department of Agriculture is October 15, 2007. In addition, a European brown garden snail certificate is required.

Hawaii

1. Container inspection. Containers must be free from soil and debris and care must be taken to prevent contamination of Christmas trees and containers with soil during storage and loading procedures.
2. Trees shipped to Hawaii must be shaken to qualify for certification. Shaking options are:
 - a. 10 percent of Christmas trees in each consignment may be manually shaken by striking the butt of the tree on a hard surface. The debris shaken from each tree must be examined for the presence of live insect pests by an inspector. If live yellow jacket queens are found in any sampled trees in the consignment, all trees must be manually shaken.
 - b. 100% of the trees in the consignment may receive mechanical shaking (motor or PTO driven shaking unit).
3. An Oregon state phytosanitary certificate must accompany the inspected shipment. Shaking procedure used will be noted on the certificate. Certificates should be placed in a waterproof plastic envelope and securely attached to the inside of the container door.
4. Shipments of certified Christmas trees will undergo cursory destination inspection for yellow jacket queens on arrival in Honolulu.
5. Shipments of uncertified Christmas trees will receive thorough destination inspection for insect pests by the Hawaii Department of Agriculture.

Guam and other Pacific trust islands

Oregon state phytosanitary certificate is required. The Guam Department of Agriculture is requiring all imported Christmas trees to be shaken, starting this year.

New Mexico

Shipping document showing origin of trees required.

North Carolina

Same as Florida, in addition, prenotification is required. Notification can be forwarded via fax to 919-773-1041, Attn.: Dan Wall, or e-mail <Dan.wall@ncmail.net>.

Oregon

The Oregon Christmas tree law requires that a shipping permit accompany each shipment of Oregon grown Christmas trees. Living "balled and burlapped," potted, or containerized trees are regulated as nursery stock and require a nursery license.

Puerto Rico

Oregon state phytosanitary certificate is required. Additional declaration: The Christmas trees in this consignment are free from pine shoot beetle, *Tomicus piniperda*. All shipments are inspected on arrival. If any actionable pests are found, the trees will be fumigated, rejected, or destroyed at the option of the exporter. To avoid the possibility of rejection, it would be advisable to process the trees with a mechanical shaker.

Virginia

Same as Florida.

Phytosanitary certificates

Phytosanitary certification is provided by Oregon Department of Agriculture personnel. To schedule certification, call at least five (5) days before the shipping date. Phytosanitary certificates are generally valid for 14 days. Inspections are scheduled on a first call basis. There is a \$10 fee for each phytosanitary certificate issued.

USDA proposes increase in phytosanitary certificate fees

By Jan Hedberg, field coordinator

The USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has announced a proposed adjustment to the user fees charged for phytosanitary certificates. Fees would increase on commercial shipment certificates issued by the USDA, from \$50 to \$99.

Most phytosanitary certificates issued to Oregon Christmas tree growers are issued by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. APHIS is proposing to add a user fee to the certificates issued by state cooperators such as the ODA. The proposal would increase phytosanitary certificate fees by at least \$16 above the \$10 fee now charged now. The USDA comment period ended August 13th and the final decision on the fee increase will be made in the near future.

P. ramorum 2007 update

By Nancy Osterbauer, Plant Health Laboratory, Commodity Inspection Division

The Oregon Department of Agriculture performed surveys for *Phytophthora ramorum*, the sudden oak death pathogen, in Christmas tree plantations from 2002 to 2006. The pathogen was never found. Based on five years of free-from data, the USDA APHIS PPQ has agreed that annual surveys of Oregon Christmas tree plantations for *P. ramorum* are no longer necessary. Instead, surveys will be performed every two to three years to maintain free-from status. Christmas tree growers may opt to have their plantations tested in 2007. This service will be provided for a fee.

2007 Christmas tree certification to foreign countries

Aruba

No known requirements, but certificates can be issued.

Canada

Canadian customs invoice required. Please contact your inspector for current shipping regulations.

Costa Rica

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit are required. Trees and containers must be free of soil. Do not certify unless an import permit is presented.

El Salvador

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit required. Trees and containers must be free of soil.

Guatemala

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit required. Trees and containers must be free of soil.

Hong Kong

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit are required. Trees and containers must be free of soil.

Japan

Federal phytosanitary certificate is required. Trees and containers must be free of soil. To avoid the possibility of Japan rejecting or fumigating because of live insects or dead or diseased needles, it would be advisable to process the trees with a mechanical shaker.

Korea

Federal phytosanitary certificate is required. Pine prohibited. Douglas fir prohibited from Columbia and Curry counties. Trees and containers must be free of soil. Add additional declaration, "This shipment was inspected and found free of *Phytophthora ramorum*."

Mexico

Phytosanitary certificate (PC) required for *Abies* spp., *Pinus sylvestris*, and *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. An import permit (IP) is not required for these species, but is preferred. PC and IP required for all other Christmas trees and conifer branches. All requirements on the IP must be met for trees to be certified. The IP is obtained from the customer in Mexico. In order to obtain a federal PC the following requirements must be met:

- If required, obtain import permit first.
- The trees must be inspected prior to harvest.
- Shipped trees must be mechanically shaken, prior to shipping, and must be clean and free from dead branches and twigs, or yellow and red needles caused by pests or diseases.

- Trees must not be dyed or flocked, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Mexican Forestry Department.
- Trees must be free of pine shoot beetle, European pine shoot moth, white pine blister rust, and gypsy moth.
- Numerous class 2 organisms are also prohibited or have established tolerance levels. Some of these organisms include pine needle scale, Douglas fir twig weevil, Engleman spruce weevil, black pineleaf scale, etc. A complete list is available from ODA or USDA/APHIS.
- Points of entry into Mexico are: Ensenada, Mexicali, Tecate, Tijuana, C. Hidalgo, Ojinargra, Cd. Juarez, Piedras Negras, Cd. Acuna, Manzanillo, Mexico City, Acapulco, Lazaro Cardenas, Columbia, Salina Cruz, Subtenente Lopez, Mazatlan, Topolobampo, Agua Prieta, Nogales, San Luis Rio Colorado, Matamoros, Reynosa, Nv. Progreso, Cd. M. Aleman, Nv. Laredo, Altamira, Tampico, Veracruz, Coatzacoalcos, Merida, Progreso.
- Please contact your inspector for current shipping regulations.

Palau

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit required.

Panama

Import permit and federal phytosanitary certificate showing the trees' origin are required.

Singapore

Neither IP nor PC is required. PCs can be provided as a courtesy.

Taiwan

PC is required. Trees and containers must be free of soil. Additional declaration: "This shipment has been thoroughly inspected and found free from long-horned beetle and pinewood nematode."

The Philippines

Federal phytosanitary certificate and import permit required. Trees and containers must be free of soil.

All other foreign countries

1. Phytosanitary certificate required.
2. The foreign importer (buyer) should obtain a plant import permit from the ministry or department of agriculture of the importing country.
3. Christmas tree growers may wish to contact the importing country's nearest consulate office in the United States for agricultural inspection and customs requirements.

For a specific country's shipping requirements, contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Salem, 503-986-4644, or USDA-APHIS, Portland, 503-326-2814.

Certification request

In order that we may supply you, in a timely manner, with the various certificates that you need for the coming Christmas tree season, please take a few minutes to complete and return this form. Your cooperation will eliminate delays and save time for everyone. Thank you.

Business name _____

(1) Shipping permits/certificates

Please indicate the number and type of certificates you need.

Quantity	Type of certificate
_____	Christmas tree shipping permits
_____	European brown garden snail certificates (required for Christmas tree shipments to AL, AR, FL, MS, NC, TN, VA).
_____	European pine shoot moth certificates (required for shipping pine Christmas trees to California). Only pines from fields that have a negative trapping history for pine shoot moth are eligible.

(2) Exporting Christmas trees

Christmas trees shipped out of the continental United States usually require an inspection and phytosanitary certification prior to shipping, and may also require a preharvest field inspection. If you plan to export Christmas trees to Mexico, Hawaii, Japan, Puerto Rico, or other foreign area, please complete the section below

<i>Country or area of destination</i>	<i>Approximate number of loads</i>
---------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Please list the field location(s) where the trees for export are being grown (use a separate sheet if necessary). Indicate the approximate acreage of the field, the types of trees (nobles, grands, Dougs, pines, etc.) and include maps, addresses, and other references as needed.

Return completed form to
Gary McAninch
Oregon Department of Agriculture
635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-2532

European brown garden snail compliance agreement

As authorized in ORS 570.306 through ORS 570.310, and because a quarantine (OAR 603-52-129) has been established against the introduction and spread of European brown garden snail, *Helix aspersa*, an agreement is hereby established between the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Christmas tree grower identified below for the purpose of maintaining Oregon cut Christmas trees free from European brown garden snails.

Business name _____ License # _____
(please print)

Owner's name _____
(please print)

Street address _____
City State Zip

Telephone _____

Please indicate the state(s) listed below to which you will ship Christmas trees.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Florida | Number of truck loads _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North Carolina | Number of truck loads _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Virginia | Number of truck loads _____ |

The above named Christmas tree grower agrees to comply with the terms as specified in the compliance procedures.

Owner's signature Date

Return completed form to:

*Gary McAninch
Oregon Department of Agriculture
635 Capitol Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-2532*

European brown garden snail certification

The Oregon Department of Agriculture has entered into the Master Permit Program with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, for the purpose of certifying Christmas trees grown in Oregon and offered for sale in Florida, North Carolina, or Virginia. The Master Permit Program establishes a list of Oregon Christmas tree growers whose plantations are certified to be free from European brown garden snail. The Master Permit Program will allow Christmas trees produced by participating growers to clear agriculture inspection with minimum delay.

To meet the Master Permit Program requirements for shipping Christmas trees to Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia, Oregon Christmas tree growers must comply with the following.

Compliance procedures

1. The grower shall notify the Oregon Department of Agriculture of intent to ship Christmas trees to Florida, North Carolina, or Virginia by completing the enclosed compliance agreement. Return the completed form to the Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Division, 635 Capitol Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301-2532. Only the names of growers who have completed and returned compliance agreements by October 15, 2007 will be included on the list sent to Florida, North Carolina and Virginia.
2. The Oregon Department of Agriculture will conduct a visual inspection for the presence of European brown garden snail.
3. Christmas tree plantations found to be free from European brown garden snail infestation shall qualify for master permit certification.
4. The department will prepare a list of all qualified growers and forward the list to Florida, North Carolina and Virginia agriculture officials.

Reminder...

European brown garden snail certificate must still accompany each shipment.

Mailing/shipping labels

Gary McAninch, program supervisor

Most states, including Oregon, do not regulate cut flowers, cut branches, and products produced from them such as wreaths, garlands, door-swags, bulk branches, and boughs. Even though wreaths and cut boughs are not regulated, most states have the authority to inspect packages containing plant products.

As the holiday season approaches the following information may help with interstate delivery of your bulk and finished Christmas greens. The state of California's labeling requirements are the most restrictive, therefore if your labels comply with California requirements, the labels meet the requirements of all other states.

For bulk shipments of greens or finished wreaths, your invoice or bill of lading must include the following information:

1. your company's name and address
2. statement of origin such as, "manufactured in Marion County"
3. the name and address of the consignee
4. an itemized list of the products included in the consignment.

For direct market sales, your mailing or shipping label must include

1. your company's name and address.
2. statement of origin.
3. consignee's name and address.
4. statement of contents: such as "one holiday wreath."

Mailing/shipping labels that do not include this information are generally held for inspection by agriculture officials. The shipping carton is opened and inspected to assure compliance with pest cleanliness regulations.

Note: Pine boughs and cones in manufactured wreaths are exempt from California's European pine shoot moth and cereal leaf beetle quarantines and will not require origin or treatment certificates to ship into California.

Shipments of holiday greens to customers in foreign countries must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate. Contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture Plant Division at 503-986-4644 to arrange for inspection and certification.

Soil erosion: A downhill battle

By Sheila Ault, water quality specialist,
Natural Resources Division

Sometimes it takes a push to get things going in the right direction. Oregon Christmas tree growers like Tom McNabb and Jim Puffer of Yule Tree Farms are among those who are working hard to prevent and control erosion from their operations.

“Tom’s told me to keep pushing erosion control,” said Stephanie Page, Compliance Leader in the Agricultural Water Quality Program at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). “He thinks the industry needs to pay attention to these kinds of problems.”

Sediment from eroding Christmas tree fields can harm water quality, reduce soil quality, and even cause roadside hazards or flooding problems for neighbors.

Controlling erosion is a challenge for Christmas tree growers in the Willamette Valley. Many Christmas tree fields are steep, with easily eroded soils. Common silvicultural activities can also cause problems.

Typically, growers plant trees up and down the slope to allow for equipment access. This eliminates cross-slope planting as an erosion control option. They also plant trees close together, making it difficult to mow or otherwise manage a cover crop.

Some Christmas tree growers have realized that the benefits of erosion control far outweigh the potential difficulties, and are using creative erosion control strategies that benefit their operations and protect water quality. Yule Tree Farms is one such grower.

Yule Tree takes the proactive approach, and tries hard to prevent erosion problems before they happen. Farm managers identify potentially sensitive areas even before the trees are planted. They leave the sensitive areas in grass cover, which prevents gully erosion and provides other benefits as well.

“It’s often a waste of time to plant trees in wet areas like that,” said Puffer. “The trees grow poorly or die. It’s cheaper to plan ahead and leave those areas alone.”

Other examples of erosion prevention can be found on several of Yule Tree’s fields. They use grass strips planted across the slope. These filter strips help reduce sheet, rill, and gully erosion. The strips keep sediment out of waterways and protect soil quality by keeping it on the field.

“Another benefit of those strips is that we can use them as farm roads, and get out on the fields earlier in the year with vehicles,” Puffer said.

Field borders are another technique Yule Tree uses to help filter sediment from runoff. They are particularly useful in keeping sediment out of the road or roadside ditch. Field borders are visually attractive, especially in the winter and spring, adding to customer appeal.

Yule Tree recognizes the benefits of erosion control practices to the Christmas tree industry’s image. They showcase their stewardship efforts on their Web site and other marketing materials. They are pushing others in the industry to follow, and enhance Christmas tree growers’ image as environmental stewards.

McNabb serves on the Oregon Association of Nurseries’ natural resources committee and encourages other growers to take erosion control seriously. He has been instrumental in fostering discussion between ODA and the industry.

“It makes such a difference to have support from a grower like that when we’re working with the industry,” Page said. “This is what it takes to make things happen.”

Weevil alert!

By Dennis Magnello, horticulturist

The Douglas fir twig weevil, *Cylindrocopturus furnissi*, is a pest of quarantine concern to Mexico (see the March 2007 edition of this newsletter for a description of the weevil). In recent years, including last year, shipments of Douglas fir Christmas trees were rejected by Mexican quarantine officials because of this pest.

In order to avoid a repeat of these costly rejections, Christmas tree fields inspected by ODA horticulturists will not be certified for export to Mexico when more than 2 percent of the trees in the field are determined to be infested with the twig weevil larvae.

If you are considering shipping Christmas trees to a foreign destination, please contact the ODA horticulturist in your area as early as possible in order that you may receive field inspections and subsequent notification of the export status of those fields in a timely manner.

Christmas tree survey

The USDA-NASS (National Agricultural Statistics Service) Christmas tree survey will be sent out to growers this spring. This survey is helpful to the Oregon Christmas tree industry in tracking its place nationally. Statistics gathered help measure the annual growth and change of this important agricultural commodity. The survey is paid for with funds allocated by your Christmas Tree Advisory Committee.

The survey is voluntary but your participation is needed to ensure accurate results. Individual data is kept confidential. The final report is released for public use and is used to make decisions that affect the Christmas tree industry.

Each grower who receives a survey is encouraged to take a few minutes to complete this important survey.

Plan ahead for Christmas tree exports

By Dennis Magnello, horticulturist

Most Christmas tree shipments to foreign countries or to US territories overseas require an inspection and certification in the form of a federal or state phytosanitary certificate. For some destinations an import permit, issued by the importing country, is also required.

Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) horticulturists can provide the necessary inspections and certification. Adhering to the following guidelines can help exporters receive these services in a timely and efficient manner:

1. Determine the export requirements to the destination country or territory. If you are uncertain about the requirements, contact the ODA Plant Division at 503-986-4644. This issue of the ODA Christmas tree newsletter, "The Pitch and Needle," contains information about certification requirements for foreign and domestic shipments of Christmas trees.
2. Provide the ODA horticulturist in your area (your nursery and Christmas tree inspector) with a map of the plantations from which Christmas trees for export will be cut. The trees may then be inspected in the field to determine whether they meet the export requirements for freedom from insects and diseases. The preferred time to inspect trees is during the months of September and October. In November, much of the inspectors' time is taken issuing certificates, and little time is available for field inspections. Waiting until November to request field inspections will lead to delays in inspecting and certifying your shipments. In some cases, trees may also be inspected in the shipping yard prior to loading.
3. Obtain any necessary import permits and fax legible copies of them to your inspector, along with your request for phytosanitary certificates. Requests should be made at least several days, but preferably a week or more in advance and should include, for each destination, information such as the number of certificates needed, the date needed, the exporter's name and address, the importer's name and address, the type and quantity of trees being shipped, the method of transportation, the origin of the trees and, if needed, the import permit number associated with each shipment. The inspector can then make an appointment to meet you at your office or shipping yard to issue the certificates. The fax number for the Plant Division in Salem is 503-986-4786.

Christmas tree growers who are not exporting trees to foreign destinations may also request field inspections if they are experiencing problems with their trees, or just as a precautionary procedure to determine whether any significant insect or disease problems are present.

Useful Web sites

Oregon Department of Agriculture

<http://oregon.gov/ODA>

Pacific Northwest Plant Disease Control Handbook's online version

<http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/index.cfm>

Pacific Northwest Insect Management Handbook's online version

<http://pnwpest.org/pnw/insects>

Pacific Northwest Weed Management Handbook's online version

<http://weeds.ippc.orst.edu/pnw/weeds>

Washington State University Extension—Christmas trees

<http://smallfarms.wsu.edu/crops/christmastreesindex.htm>

Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association

<http://nwtrees.com>

Shipping permits

Shipping permits are provided to growers who are selling wholesale shipments of trees, both in state and out of state. They verify that the trees have been grown and inspected by ODA inspectors. Please don't share your shipping permits with other vendors. The license numbers are for your business only. If your license number is associated with trees that have not been inspected by the ODA, your trees may be at risk. There have been reports of non-licensed Christmas tree growers using shipping permits belonging to legitimately licensed growers. Safeguard your trees and your license number.

2007 Christmas Tree Advisory Committee

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19900 Grade Road SE
Silverton OR 97381
PHONE (503) 873-3838

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12704 Ehlen Rd. NE
Aurora OR 97002
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24048 Maxfield Creek
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