



November 16, 2007

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Plant Protection
and Quarantine

Washington, DC
20250

Important Notice

Enclosed with this notice are posters reflecting newly amended rules governing the shipment of citrus fruit from Florida to other States.

Please remove and destroy the previous “Don’t Spread Citrus Canker” posters and display the new ones enclosed with this notice!

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is seeking your support in preventing the spread of citrus canker from Florida to other States. APHIS has published a new Federal rule amending the previous requirements that must be met to ship fresh citrus fruit from the State of Florida, and we want to make you aware of the changes.

Under the new rule, the requirement for grove inspection has been replaced with a requirement that the fruit be inspected and packed at a commercial packinghouse. All other requirements remain in force.

To protect citrus-producing States and U.S. Territories from citrus canker, the new rule continues to prohibit Florida citrus from being shipped to those States or Territories.

By law, all shipments of fresh citrus are prohibited from leaving Florida unless they meet the following requirements. The fruit must be

- Inspected at the packinghouse by an APHIS inspector,
- Treated at the packinghouse with a USDA-approved disinfectant, and
- Packed at a commercial packinghouse into APHIS-approved containers bearing a Limited Permit (“LIMITED PERMIT: USDA-APHIS-PPQ, Not for distribution in AZ, CA, HI, LA, TX, and American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands of the United States”). The Limited Permit confirms that the required inspection and treatment have been carried out and that the fruit is being delivered only to addresses in non-citrus-producing States.

Shipping companies can advise homeowners that they can ship fruit out of Florida as long as they have it treated, inspected, and packed at a commercial packinghouse. To find out how to contact commercial packinghouses in your area, call the Citrus Canker Hotline toll free at 1-800-282-5153.

What do these requirements mean to you and your business? Unless a shipment of fresh citrus is packed at a commercial packinghouse and contains a clearly visible Limited Permit, the citrus cannot leave the State of Florida. Within Florida, the movement of citrus is unrestricted, and no special permits are required.

If citrus canker were to spread from Florida, the disease would jeopardize the citrus industry in other parts of the country. We are, therefore, asking all Florida residents and shipping outlets to join us in the effort to stop the spread of citrus canker by shipping fresh citrus fruit only if it meets the APHIS requirements explained above.

We sincerely thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions about these new requirements, please call 1-800-282-5153 or visit the following Web sites:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/hot_issues/citrus_canker/citrus_canker.shtml
<http://doacs.state.fl.us/pi/canker>