

# 4

Export Program  
Manual

## Special Procedures

### Commodity • Potatoes for Consumption

---

#### Contents

Introduction	page 4-7-1
Inspection Protocol	page 4-7-1
Certified Seed Potatoes as Table Stock	page 4-7-1
Individual Truckload Potatoes That Are Not Certified Seed Potatoes	page 4-7-2
Potatoes Sent Directly for Packing	page 4-7-4
Potatoes Placed in Storage	page 4-7-4

---

#### Introduction

The following section of the XPM deals with potatoes for consumption. This section covers the inspection protocol of certified seed potatoes as table stock and individual truckload potatoes that are not certified seed potatoes for Mexico. Specific inspection guidelines for root knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.) and bacterial ring rot (BRR) (*Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*) are provided to guide the user in the proper certification procedures for potatoes for consumption to Mexico.

---

#### Inspection Protocol

##### Certified Seed Potatoes as Table Stock

Inspect potatoes in one percent of the containers (boxes or bags) in the shipment for external symptoms of the pests of quarantine concern to Mexico. Additionally, cut five potatoes from each sample container and visually examine for pests of quarantine concern to Mexico. During the external inspection, look for lesions, galls, and necrotic rings or spots on the surface of the tubers. During the internal inspection, look for necrotic and brownish tissue (for nematodes), usually below surface galls; and for intensive veinal necrosis (vein-like rot) and rings of discoloration in the flesh of the tubers (for viruses). Suspect infections must be analyzed and identified.

## Individual Truckload Potatoes That Are Not Certified Seed Potatoes

The one percent inspection rate specified above will be superseded by the following Ware Potato Inspection Procedure for Mexico:

Sample shipments for export to Mexico at the rate of 400 tubers per shipment. Sample in the same manner as under the current inspection procedure (four bags taken at tailgate inspection, or the equivalent in-line inspection for each truck load, etc.). Inspect samples for root knot nematodes and bacterial ring rot. In addition, during the external inspection, look for lesions, galls, and necrotic rings or spots on the surface of the tubers. During the internal inspection, look for necrotic and brownish tissue (for nematodes), usually below surface galls; and for intensive veinal necrosis (vein-like rot) and rings of discoloration in the flesh of the tubers (for viruses). Suspect infections must be analyzed and identified.

### Root Knot Nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.)

The 400 tubers will have 75% of their surface peeled and the USDA approved inspector will visually examine the peeled potatoes for symptoms of root knot nematode. The shipper will provide personnel for the peeling and adequate light for the peeling area. Adequate lighting will mean at least two 60 watt bulbs directed at the work surface no more than 36 inches from the surface of the inspection table. The shipper will provide the approved inspector the name of the producer and the lot number at the time of the inspection. The approved inspector must approve the inspection facility for adequate lighting, space and worker safety prior to initiation of inspection. Should the inspector observe indications that the potatoes may be infected with root knot nematodes, the shipment will not be certified for export to Mexico unless tested and found free of Columbia root knot nematode. Subsequent shipments from lots with *Meloidogyne* spp. will not be certified for export to Mexico unless tested and found free of *Meloidogyne chitwoodi*. The laboratory used will be a plant pathology laboratory at the State Department of Agriculture, the State University or other APHIS accredited laboratory.

### Bacterial Ring Rot (BRR) (*Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*)

Cut and examine samples taken for nematode inspection for symptoms of bacterial ring rot. Shipments will require BRR testing in the following instances:

1. During inspection symptoms of bacterial ring rot are discovered in a shipment.

Shipments with suspect BRR must be tested with the following procedures prior to certification. The shipper will be responsible for costs of shipment of the sample to the laboratory and the costs of testing. If the exporter elects to not export the shipment, no testing will be performed and this lot will be ineligible for export.

- ❖ An additional 200-tuber sample will be taken and sent to an approved laboratory.
- ❖ The sample will be washed and the stem ends of all tubers sampled and tested for BRR infection.
- ❖ Testing will be done using method(s) adequate to determine whether BRR is present. *Elisa*, PCR, and immunofluorescent antibody tests may be used as appropriate in the judgment of the bacteriologist.

Should BRR be discovered, the infested lot will be rejected and further shipments from that grower must be tested for BRR according to the same test procedure.

2. When APHIS receives official notification from Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca y Alimentacion (SAGARPA) of an interception of BRR.

If APHIS receives official notification from SAGARPA a trace back will be conducted as per the protocol. When the field is identified all lots from that field will require testing for BRR as per the above laboratory protocol, and must be found free of BBR before a Federal Phytosanitary Certificate is issued. The infected field will be suspended from the program until appropriate treatment is conducted to the satisfaction of the USDA. Packing, grading, and transport equipment; and storage bins associated with the lots from the infected fields must be treated/sanitized.

If a second field is implicated from the same farm then an investigation will be conducted and that producer will be suspended from the program until an appropriate treatment of the operation (field tests, equipment and bin sterilization) are conducted to the satisfaction of USDA. and every field lot must be tested by the above protocol before a certificate is issued for the remainder of that crop year.

If the exporter elects not to export to Mexico no testing will be required.



If a shed experiences more than two separate incidents of BRR interceptions (meaning receiving contaminated lots from different producers) an investigation will be conducted to establish the cause and appropriate action will be undertaken.

The potatoes must be washed and appropriately treated with a sprout inhibitor. The potatoes must be free of soil. Also, sampled and inspected potatoes must show no signs of sprouting. The presence of meristematic growth length of greater than 5 millimeters from the base of the growth is considered a “sprout”. The presence of bud swellings measuring no more than 5 millimeters in length from the base of the growth will be considered a “peep” and is acceptable by Mexico. **Do not** refuse to certify if “peeps” are present.

### Potatoes Sent Directly for Packing

Potatoes will be treated with sprout inhibitor on the packing line, utilizing label dosage and restrictions. Potatoes that have not been treated with a sprout inhibitor are not eligible for export.

### Potatoes Placed in Storage

- ◆ Potatoes stored for less than three months must be treated with sprout inhibitor in storage or on packing line
- ◆ Potatoes stored for three to five months must be treated with sprout inhibitor in storage and once again on the packing line
- ◆ Potatoes stored for more than five months must be treated twice with sprout inhibitor in storage and once again on the packing line



The final application of sprout inhibitor must be done after the potatoes have been washed. Shipper declarations for both certified seed usage and sprout inhibitor treatment(s) may be made on the same document. Do **not** place sprout inhibitor treatment information in the treatment section of the PC.



Mexico allows the importation of commercial potatoes (for consumption) under an Import Permit that lists specific requirements. One of the requirements is that the potatoes be treated with a sprout inhibitor, as they do not want the potatoes to be used for planting. Import Permits examined require that compliance with this requirement must be stated as an additional declaration on the phytosanitary certificate.

Do **not** certify any potatoes unless you have credible documentation that the treatment was performed. Verbal assurances from the exporter are **not** sufficient.