

Dear Stakeholder:

### **Notice of Suspension of Tarpless Container Fumigations**

On February 25, 2008, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine (APHIS, PPQ) suspended tarpless container fumigations. Due to concerns regarding the efficacy of tarpless container fumigation treatments using methyl bromide, APHIS has suspended the procedures listed in the APHIS, PPQ Treatment Manual, Section 2-8: *Chemical Treatments-- Fumigants--Methyl Bromide--Special Procedures for Container Fumigations Without a Tarpaulin*. Therefore, tarpless container fumigations for quarantine purposes conducted under APHIS supervision are no longer authorized. Until further notice, all container fumigations must be conducted under tarpaulin in accordance with the Treatment Manual, Section 2-4: *Chemical Treatment-- Fumigants--Methyl Bromide--Tarpaulin Fumigation*. We will revise the Treatment Manual, accordingly, to address the suspension of tarpless container fumigations.

The Treatment Quality Assurance Unit of the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology (CPHST) will conduct a study to determine if the tarpless fumigation process would be efficacious if performed solely on containers that were pre-certified as leak-proof, based on pressure testing. The study will also determine the optimum dosage rate that is needed to maintain adequate gas concentrations of methyl bromide for an efficacious treatment. Based on the results of the study, we will revise the Treatment Manual, accordingly.

For information on our APHIS treatment manual; [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import\\_export/plants/manuals/ports/treatment.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/manuals/ports/treatment.shtml) and for information on the CPHST pressure testing and methyl bromide concentration degradation study go to: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/cphst/tgau.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/cphst/tgau.shtml).

If you have further questions, please contact Mr. William Thomas, Associate Executive Director of Plant Health Programs, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 131, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-8261.

Sincerely,

/s/

William Thomas  
Associate Executive Director of Plant Health Programs