

Asian Gypsy Moth Information forwarded to the Maritime Exchange from APHIS

Below is the information that is being sent to various shipping organizations regarding the new requirements for Asian gypsy moth certification from designated ports in Japan.

The latest update includes the companies that are authorized and trained to conduct Asian gypsy moth (AGM) vessel certification in Japan. This requirement starts on June 1, 2007. Due to high numbers of Asian gypsy moths in these port areas, vessels that visit six high-risk ports during the established high-risk periods that intend to visit U.S. berth within the next year are required to have inspection certificates for freedom from Asian gypsy moth. Vessels that have not arranged for this certificate risk facing delays for entry to U.S. berths. Please disseminate this information to your membership.

The following is an update of the regulatory status for Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) in Japan and Far East Russia. Please circulate to appropriate shipping interests.

Background

Asian gypsy moth *Lymantria dispar* (AGM) is a destructive invasive pest species that attacks a wide variety of trees and is a major threat to natural resources in the United States. It is native to Asia and has been intercepted at ports arriving on ships and containers from Asian ports. Vessel superstructures and cargo containers are pathways for potential introduction of AGM. There has been much pressure by Federal, state, and resource officials to prevent this pest from becoming introduced and established into the U.S.

AGM detections in the U.S. have increased significantly in the past three or four years, from a historical average of one detection every two years to now two or three detections each year. Currently, Customs and Border Protection inspects the superstructure of arriving ships for egg masses. However, due to the large volume of maritime vessels that arrive at U.S. ports and resource limitations, adequate inspection for AGM has not been possible.

Field evidence has demonstrated that female AGM moths oviposit egg masses on vessel superstructures and on the containers at their ports of origin. When the vessels arrive at U.S. ports with egg masses or hatching larvae, the vessels themselves pose a threat that is currently being partially addressed by a number of initiatives that target the vessel proper at origin and at arrival. Shipping interests are strongly advised to remove any and all egg masses that are visible on vessels and on cargo and containers. Due to incidents of AGM egg masses and lifeforms found on vessel from Far East Russia and Japan, measures have been enacted to reduce risk to natural resources in the U.S. and Canada.

Japan Initiative

Commercial vessels that transit the high-risk ports during high-risk periods listed in the below attachment will be required to have certification of freedom from Asian gypsy moth if they intend to visit U.S. and Canada ports before the start of the next high-risk season the following year.

The certification system will be in place on June 1, 2007. Vessel inspection entities in Japan have been selected and completed training on U.S. and Canada requirements in order to issue certification. It is the intent of the U.S. and Canada for shipping interests to contact these Japanese inspection entities directly in order to facilitate the scheduling of certification. This is consistent with the program in Far East Russia, except that the system in Japan will be operated by selected private companies, not government entities.

The following are a listing of six selected and trained companies that will provide AGM certification in Japan:

Nippon Kaiji Kentei Kyokai (NKKK)
Shin Nihon Kentei Kyokai (SNKK)
All Nippon Checkers Corporation (ANCC)
The Japan Cargo Tally Corporation (JCTC)
Japan Export Vehicle Inspection Center Co., Ltd. (JEVIC)
Japan Grain Inspection Association (JGIA)

The following is the list of six high-risk ports with the high-risk periods. If vessels that berth in these ports are destined to U.S. and Canada during high-risk periods sometime within the next year, U.S. and Canada will require AGM certificates. Certification should be scheduled for the last high-risk port visited prior to departure from Japan. The exception is if the vessel is scheduled to travel to Far East Russia after Japan, where it would receive certification at that location. All vessels are strongly encouraged to comply with these requirements to prevent any disruption or delays on arrival into U.S. ports. Vessels that arrive without certification are subject to offshore inspection or inspection in alternate, remote locations. This is likely to result in schedule delays. Vessels with certificates will not be subject to additional, non-routine agricultural inspection.

The designation of high-risk ports in Japan is limited to those port areas where AGM monitoring has determined to have high populations of moths. Therefore, U.S. and Canada have chosen to take the least restrictive action towards regulatory action. In 2006, there were eight (8) ports designated as high-risk based upon port surveillance trapping. A reduction of moth counts allowed for us to reduce the number of ports for 2007. This reduction must be for two consecutive years in order for officials to have confidence that a port can be redesignated. The dropping of Shizuoka and Chiba from high-risk designation reduced the list of vessels on the high-risk list from almost 1600 to 600, a more than 60% reduction. Designated ports are subject to annual change dependent upon monitoring results.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the United States Department of Agriculture are committed to a harmonized approach to regulating vessels from ports in Japan that are considered high risk for Asian gypsy moth based on port surveillance data. This includes uniformly accepting certificates verifying freedom from all life stages of Asian gypsy moth issued by Japanese inspection entities, as well as cooperation between Canadian and American inspection entities carrying out vessel inspections.

Far East Russia requirements are unchanged

The long-standing requirements from Far East Russia remain the same. Cooperators in Russia reported huge amounts of egg masses in surrounding forest areas over the past winter.

Regarding Russia, the large majority of the vessel inspections are conducted in Vladivostok, Nakhodka, and Vostochnyy. The other ports that we use to make up the high-risk list for Russia: Olga, Slavyanka, Zarubino, Plastun, Vanino, and Posyet. The high risk period for all of the Far East Russia ports remains July 15- September 30.

Please refer to information on the AGM procedures which is located at the following USDA-APHIS-PPQ website:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/gypsy_moth/index.shtml. The procedures are presently being amended to reflect the new Japan requirements.

Please contact me at 301-734-4374 or E-Mail at michael.simon@aphis.usda.gov if you have any further questions and concerns.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Michael Simon
Senior Staff Officer
Quarantine Policy, Analysis, and Support
USDA-APHIS-PPQ
Riverdale, MD 20737
PH: 301-734-4374
FAX: 301-734-5269

2007 Japanese High Risk Ports

Table 1. Japanese High Risk AGM Ports

Japan Ports	Period of Risk
Ooita	June 1 – August 15
Hiroshima	June 1 – August 15
Hannon	June 1 – August 15
Sakata	July 1 – September 15
Hachinohe	July 15 – October 1
Hakodate	July 15 – October 1