

Soil Movement Regulations

Because soil can readily provide a pathway for the introduction of a variety of dangerous organisms into the United States, soil is strictly controlled under the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) quarantine regulations ([Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations 330](#)). The following is excerpted from the APHIS web site. (For more information, please read [Circular Q-330-300](#).)

The movement of soil into the United States from foreign sources is prohibited, and movement within the continental U.S. is restricted unless authorized by APHIS under specific conditions or safeguards. The importation of soil from foreign sources and/or the interstate movement is authorized by APHIS solely under strictly controlled circumstances described in a permit and/or compliance agreement.

Transporting US Soils

Soil from Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands is handled as foreign soil and is authorized movement into the continental U.S. under the provisions described for foreign soil.

Domestic soil (from within the continental U.S.) may be restricted movement from specific areas under APHIS quarantine regulations. When required by quarantine, the movement of domestic soil may be authorized through the development of a compliance agreement established between the local APHIS office and the person or firm responsible for handling the soil.

Persons desiring more information related to the movement of domestic soil are encouraged to contact the local Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) office and State agricultural officials. The PPQ Permit Unit in Riverdale, Maryland can help identify appropriate offices. The telephone Soils number for the Permit Unit is Area Code (301) 734-0841, fax (301) 734-5786.

Importing Canadian Soil

Soil cannot enter the U.S. if from the following areas:

- * Alberta: A farm unit and associated land located near the municipality of Fort Saskatchewan; and a farm unit and associated land located near the municipality of Spruce Grove.*
- * British Columbia: That portion of the municipality of Central Saanich on Vancouver Island, east of the west Saanich Road.*
- * Newfoundland and Labrador: The entire Island of Newfoundland.*
- * Quebec: The municipality of Saint-Amble.*

Soil from other parts of Canada imported into the U.S. subject only to inspection and verification of the origin.

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Importing Foreign Soils¹

The importation and movement of untreated soil is considered by APHIS to be an extremely high risk activity. For this reason, several levels of review and approval are required before a permit can be provided. Up to two months may be necessary for processing.

Obtaining the Permit

For more information on obtaining a soil import or other plant and plant product permits, visit [the APHIS permit web site](#). The process is initiated by submitting the completed [PPQ Form 525](#) (see [APHIS Factsheet for e-Permits](#).) and will likely include an inspection of your lab by a USDA inspector. Permits can take as little as 2 weeks if soil sterilization can be done at the port of entry, but may take as long as 90 days if you must receive untreated soils. Permits are typically issued for three years

If you have questions or need assistance, contact EH&S, 775-673-7329.

¹ Please note that an importation permit is tied to the laboratory of the permittee and his/her soil handling processes. You may not use another DRI employee's permit to import soil unless the materials will be used in the permitted lab space and treated as specified on the permit for that lab. If you obtain a permit for your lab, please ensure EH&S has a copy of the permit on file.