

## **Import of Plants, Plant Products and Organisms**

The plant quarantine should always attempt to promote the fast entry of permissible plants and plant products to help the economy of the country. The following guidelines are therefore intended to facilitate plant and seed import, consistent with safety to crops in particular and the environment in general.

### Preliminaries

#### 1. Initial preparation

Plan well in advance.

#### 2. Forms of plant materials for import

Pollen, in vitro culture, seed, seedling, fruits, unrooted cuttings, rhizomes, corms, bulbs, recently rooted cuttings, and long established plants.

Remember genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and living modified organisms (LMOs) are not allowed to import into Sri Lanka.

#### 3. Purpose of imports

As mother stock; multiplication and export; cut flower production; ornamental purposes; grower's interest; processing; consumption; sale, etc.

#### 4. Facilities needed to handle the imported materials

Isolated fields, screen houses, net houses or suitable storage facilities as the case may be.

### Application for Permits

#### 5. Procedure

Apply for a plant import permit giving necessary details in the prescribed application form. Specimen application form is given in Annex XXX.

Submit the application either

Director (Seed Certification & Plant Protection)

P.O.Box, 74 No. 1, Sarasavi Mawatha

Peradeniya

Phone: 08-388877, 08-388044

Fax: 08- 388077

E-mail: scppc@sltnet.lk

Or to

Deputy Director (Plant Quarantine)

National Plant Quarantine Service

Canada Friendship Road

Katunayaka

Phone: 01-252028, 01-252029

Fax: 01- 253709 E-mail: npqs@sltnet.lk

#### 6. Give exact identity of the material to be imported

For fruits & vegetables imported for consumption, the common name is sufficient.

In the case of all other plant materials (including seeds), the botanical name of the plant should be given. The botanical name is the scientific name in Latin that facilitates a precise identification of the plant species. It has two components:

- (a) Generic name - starting with the capital.
- (b) Specific epithet - The second name starting with the simple letter.

The botanical name is usually printed or typed in Italics or underlined, e.g. *Zea mays* (*Zea Mays*) is the botanical name for maize or corn. The name of a 'Horticultural sport', 'Cultivar' ('variety') or 'Hybrid' should be written within single quotation marks with a capital initial letter after the specific name. For example, *Dracaena 'Massangeana'* (or *Dracaena 'Massangeana'*) should not be referred to as *Massangeana* in the application. For the import of vegetable seeds, both the botanical name and the common name (i.e. accepted English name) with the name of variety, strain and/or hybrid should be given.

7. Specify clearly the quantity and the material  
Quantities of each of the material should be mentioned in the application form. The material you wish to import may be fruits, seeds, seedlings, rooted cuttings, unrooted cuttings, rhizomes, bulbs, corms, in vitro cultures, whole plants etc.

In the case of import of vegetable seeds, packaging volume should also be given. Special conditions applicable for import of fruits and vegetables are given on the back the application form.

Most tissue-cultured products are permitted provided they arrive as in vitro cultures in sealed vessels made of clear glass or plastic and containing clear growth media that should not contain any antibiotics or charcoal.

8. Certain plants are not permitted but their seeds are allowed (Annex XIV). Seeds or seedlings of all palms are not allowed.

9. Indicate the following in the appropriate places in the application form

- Name and address of the supplier.
- Intended use or purpose.
- Locality and country where the material was produced.
- Means of importation (whether air freight, sea freight, air mail, accompanied baggage, etc.).
- Probable dates of shipment and entry into Sri Lanka.
- Port of entry.

10. Where importers wish to test materials by themselves or at appropriate institutes, adequate descriptions of the varieties should be submitted as requested by the institutes.

How The Department of Agriculture (DOA) Will Act on Permit Applications

11. Processing of application  
All Applications will be processed within two weeks of receipt.

12. Reasons for any delay  
Issue of permits may be delayed when the application is incomplete. For the issue of permits to import some items, inspection of the facilities available with the importer may be a prerequisite and the importer will be notified about such requirements.

13. Reasons for refusal of permits

If the material requested is an item prohibited for import into Sri Lanka, Plant Import Permit will not be issued unless the applicant is qualified for importation of such material.

14. Issue of the Plant Import Permits

Permits will be issued without restriction for those vegetable seeds that are in the approved list. This list will be published periodically in the newspapers.

Permit may contain the information on the conditions of entry and the period of validity.

Importer shall take every step to fulfill the conditions imposed.

How The Material Should Arrive in Sri Lanka

15. Packaging and labeling

The consignment must be securely packaged to prevent spillage in transit. Every package must bear information on the name of the plant, (including the name of the variety) and treatment, if any, name and address of supplier, name and address of consignee, permit number and the numbers of certificates covering of the consignment.

16. Packing material

Packing materials should be those approved by the Department of Agriculture.

17. Soil is prohibited

A consignment should not contain any soil (as a contaminate or as a growth medium).

Certification Needed

18. The importer must obtain, where appropriate, following certification on the consignment.

i. A phytosanitary certificate issued within 14 days prior to dispatch. This certificate must conform to the model set out by the International Plant Protection Convention. It should be issued by a duly authorized officer of the official plant protection organization of the country of origin /or export. It should contain declarations, and additional declarations if the entry conditions require such declarations.

ii. Declaration stating that consignment is free of soil.

iii. Certificate of origin must be obtained from a relevant authority (Chamber of Commerce of the exporting country).

iv. Packing list.

v. Bill of lading.

vi. Phytosanitary certificate for re-export.

vii. Importers of fresh fruits and vegetables for consumption must obtain a certificate from the plant protection authority of the country of production of fruits stating that the fruits have been in cold storage below 0°C for more than two weeks. A certificate from the master of the ship could be acceptable if pre-cooling is done on the board the ship en-route to Sri Lanka. However, certificates are not accepted from countries where fruit flies (Family: Tephritidae) not recorded in Sri Lanka are known to occur unless the fruits and vegetables have treated in a manner approved by the Director of Agriculture in order to kill all fruit fly larvae. These must be produced on request by the officer of the Department of Agriculture.

## Responsibility of The Importer

### 19. Procedure followed by the importer

On arrival of the consignment, the importer should provide the details of the importer to the Plant Quarantine Officer at the port of entry (in case of the consignment received at the General Post Office the Plant Quarantine Inspector at the Sea port Colombo), who will give necessary advice for clearance.

Plant import entry form could be used for this purpose.

Submit the originals of the certificates mentioned in 18 above to the Plant Quarantine Officer

## Procedure Followed by The DOA on Arrival of The Consignment

### 20. Inspection of the material and the certificates

The consignment shall be inspected by a Plant Quarantine Officer and or a representative from the Seed Certification and Plant Protection Center of the Department of Agriculture. They will take samples for testing.

### 21. Prescription of any treatments

If deemed necessary by the Plant Quarantine Officer, the consignment shall be subjected to treatment or other suitable method of disposal. This will be dependent on the pest infestations detected in the consignment.

### 22. Testing of the material

In some instances, the imported material will be subjected to tests to ascertain the pest infestations. If the importer wishes to test the material, then such tests should be open to specialist officers whose observations will be considered for recommendation.

### 23. Denial of entry into Sri Lanka of the consignment

Entry into Sri Lanka may be denied to any consignment plant materials,  
(a) Which has been imported without the certifications mentioned above or  
(b) Which, in the opinion of the Plant Quarantine Inspector, carries a dangerous pathogen, weed, insect or any other dangerous organism (pest).

## Post-entry Quarantine

24. For some imported material, post-entry quarantine screening will be required.

In such case, the importer should have adequate facilities.

## What You Cannot Import

25. The Regulations made under the Plant Protection Act (Gazette Extraordinary of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, No. 165/2, of Monday, November 20, 1981) lists prohibited/restricted plants. An Extract of this is given in Annex XII.

Permits to import prohibited plants will be given only to appropriate research institutes of Sri Lanka.

26. Direct import of any plant, plant material, plant product or seed from TROPICAL AMERICA are prohibited for fear of introduction of the extremely dangerous South American Leaf blight (SALB) pathogen of rubber.

27. Import of soil is prohibited.