

 **NEWS RELEASE**

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **USDA RELIEVES CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON THE MOVEMENT OF HASS AVOCADOS**

WASHINGTON, June 29, 2009--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) tomorrow will publish a final rule eliminating *Anastrepha* spp. fruit fly trapping requirements for Hass avocados imported from Mexico. This rule also allows, under certain conditions, the interstate movement of Hass avocados from areas in the United States that are quarantined for Mexican and sapote fruit flies.

APHIS is taking this action because recently completed research found that unharvested Hass avocados are not a natural host to various species in the *Anastrepha* genus, which include Mexican and sapote fruit flies. Based on these findings, APHIS is removing the current trapping and bait spray requirements for Hass avocados from Mexico, as the restrictions are no longer necessary to safely import these products into the United States. However, APHIS is still requiring Mexican Hass avocados to meet post-harvest safeguarding and other existing import requirements prior to entry into the United States.

Under the final rule, U.S.-grown Hass avocados are eligible to move interstate from areas quarantined for the Mexican fruit fly or sapote fruit fly provided certain conditions are met. The avocados must be harvested and protected from fruit fly infestations during movement from the orchard to the packinghouse. The avocados also have to be accompanied by a field record indicating the location of the orchard where the fruit originated. These measures, among others, protect against the introduction of the Mexican or sapote fruit fly into uninfested areas of the United States.

This action harmonizes the domestic and foreign requirements for the movement of Hass avocados and relieves unnecessary restrictions for avocado producers. In addition, it provides an alternative for Hass avocados to be moved interstate if they originate in a Mexican fruit fly or sapote fruit fly quarantined area of the United States.

This final rule is scheduled for publication in the June 30 *Federal Register* and becomes effective on July 30.

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