

What is Being Done to Prevent New Introductions & What Hinders These Efforts?



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1. An Interim Rule was implemented by the USDA in 1998 to reduce the risk of accidental introductions of damaging plant pests, such as the Asian longhorned beetle (ALB), in shipments from China containing solid wood packing materials.
2. It requires that all solid wood packing material (pallets, crates, dunnage, etc.) **FROM CHINA ONLY** be treated prior to shipping to the U.S. to kill all stages of the ALB. A certificate issued by the Chinese government stating that the wood has been treated must accompany all shipments containing solid wood packing.
3. Shipments not containing wood packing material must be certified free of wood.
4. The Interim Rule went into effect on December 17, 1998 and will remain in effect until permanent actions are taken to reduce the risk of pests from solid wood packing material.
5. Compliance by the Chinese to the Interim Rule is estimated at over 98%. The Canadian government has implemented shipping regulations similar to the Interim Rule.
6. USDA is currently developing guidelines for shipments containing wood packing that will apply worldwide.
7. USDA inspectors can and do deny entry of shipments in which the wood packing material has not been treated or one that lacks a proper certificate.
8. Inspectors can demand that shipments with untreated wood packing be held in a pest-secure warehouse until the contents are unloaded and inspected, and the wood shipped back to China or burned.
9. The Interim Rule only addresses the threat from China of ALB and other species that bore into solid wood. It does not protect the U.S. from alien insects and diseases from other countries coming on other substances or on live wood.
10. Over 50% of all shipments from China come via Long Beach, CA. About 100 20-40 ft long containers having solid wood packing material arrive there daily. There is no way all of these containers can be checked, even with more inspectors.
11. USDA sends inspectors inland to check suspect shipments when they reach their destination because there isn't enough space or personnel to do it at the ports.

Visit the following web pages for more information:

UVM: <http://www.uvm.edu/albeetle>

Forest Service: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/fhp/alb/>

USDA, APHIS: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/alb/index.html>

CA Food Inspection Agency: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/protect/pestrava/asialong/asialonge.shtml>

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