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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

7 CFR Part 301

[Docket No. 01–093–2]

Mediterranean Fruit Fly; Removal of Quarantined Area

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are amending the Mediterranean fruit fly regulations by removing a portion of Los Angeles County, CA, from the list of quarantined areas and by removing restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. This action is necessary to relieve restrictions that are no longer needed to prevent the spread of Mediterranean fruit fly to noninfested areas of the United States. We have determined that the Mediterranean fruit fly has been eradicated from this area and that the quarantine and restrictions are no longer necessary. As a result of this action, there are no longer any areas in the continental United States quarantined because of the Mediterranean fruit fly.

DATES: This interim rule was effective June 27, 2002. We will consider all comments that we receive on or before September 3, 2002.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by postal mail/commercial delivery or by e-mail. If you use postal mail/commercial delivery, please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 01–093–2, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 01–093–2. If you use e-mail, address your comment to

regulations@aphis.usda.gov. Your comment must be contained in the body of your message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and “Docket No. 01–093–2” on the subject line.

You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690–2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Stephen A. Knight, Senior Staff Officer, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 134, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–8247.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Mediterranean fruit fly, *Ceratitis capitata* (Wiedemann), is one of the world's most destructive pests of numerous fruits and vegetables. The Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly) can cause serious economic losses. Heavy infestations can cause complete loss of crops, and losses of 25 to 50 percent are not uncommon. The short life cycle of this pest permits the rapid development of serious outbreaks.

The Mediterranean fruit fly regulations (contained in 7 CFR 301.78 through 301.78–10 and referred to below as the regulations) restrict the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantined areas to prevent the spread of Medfly to noninfested areas of the United States.

In an interim rule effective October 15, 2001, and published in the **Federal Register** on October 19, 2001 (66 FR 53123–53124, Docket No. 01–093–1), we quarantined a portion of Los Angeles County, CA, and restricted the interstate movement of regulated articles from the quarantined area.

Based on trapping surveys conducted by the Animal and Plant Health

Inspection Service and California State and county inspectors, we have determined that the Medfly has been eradicated from the quarantined area in Los Angeles County, CA. The last finding of Medfly in that portion of Los Angeles County, CA, was September 5, 2001. Since that time, no evidence of infestation has been found in this area. We are, therefore, removing that portion of Los Angeles County, CA, from the list in § 301.78–3(c) of areas quarantined because of the Medfly. As a result of this action, there are no longer any areas in the continental United States quarantined because of the Medfly.

Immediate Action

Immediate action is warranted to remove restrictions that are no longer necessary. The portion of Los Angeles County, CA, affected by this document was quarantined to prevent the Medfly from spreading to noninfested areas of the United States. Because we have determined that the Medfly has been eradicated from this area, immediate action is necessary to remove the quarantined status of that portion of Los Angeles County, CA, and to relieve restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. Under these circumstances, the Administrator has determined that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are contrary to the public interest and that there is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553 for making this action effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

We will consider comments we receive during the comment period for this interim rule (see **DATES** above). After the comment period closes, we will publish another document in the **Federal Register**. The document will include a discussion of any comments we receive and any amendments we are making to the rule as a result of the comments.

Executive Order 12866 and Regulatory Flexibility Act

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12866. For this action, the Office of Management and Budget has waived its review under Executive Order 12866.

In an interim rule effective October 15, 2001, and published in the **Federal Register** on October 19, 2001 (66 FR 53123–53124, Docket No. 01–093–1), we added a portion of Los Angeles County,

CA, to the list of areas quarantined because of Medfly. At the time that October 2001 interim rule was published, we did not have all the data necessary for a comprehensive analysis of the effects of that interim rule on small entities. As a result, we performed an initial regulatory flexibility analysis and solicited comments regarding the effects of that action on small entities. Comments on the October 2001 interim rule were required to be received by December 18, 2001. We did not receive any comments.

This interim rule amends the regulations by removing the portion of Los Angeles County, CA, that was added to the list of quarantined areas in the October 2001 interim rule. The economic analysis contained in this interim rule is based on the information provided in the October 2001 interim rule. However, to ensure that our analysis is comprehensive, we are inviting comments on the economic analysis contained in this interim rule. In particular, we are interested in determining the number and kind of small entities that may incur benefits or costs from the implementation of this interim rule.

This action affects the interstate movement of regulated articles from the portion of Los Angeles County, CA, that had been quarantined because of Medfly. That area is a predominantly residential area with many apartment buildings. Available information indicates that there are no entities in the quarantined area that sell, process, handle, or move regulated articles. Such entities would include fruit sellers, nurseries, growers, packinghouses, certified farmers markets, and swapmeets.

The effect of this action on affected entities should be minimally positive, as they will no longer be required to treat articles to be moved interstate for Medfly.

Therefore, the termination of the quarantine on that portion of Los Angeles County, CA, should have only a minimal economic effect on any affected entities operating in this area. We anticipate that the economic effect of lifting the quarantine, though positive, will be no more significant than was the minimal effect of its imposition.

The alternative to this interim rule was to make no changes in the regulations. After consideration, we rejected this alternative because the Medfly has been eradicated from this area, and because the continued quarantined status of that portion of Los Angeles County, CA, would impose

unnecessary regulatory restrictions on any affected entities.

This interim rule contains no information collection or recordkeeping requirements.

Executive Order 12372

This program/activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.025 and is subject to Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. (See 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V.)

Executive Order 12988

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule: (1) Preempts all State and local laws and regulations that are inconsistent with this rule; (2) has no retroactive effect; and (3) does not require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit in court challenging this rule.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This interim rule contains no information collection or recordkeeping requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 301

Agricultural commodities, Plant diseases and pests, Quarantine, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation.

Accordingly, we are amending 7 CFR part 301 as follows:

PART 301—DOMESTIC QUARANTINE NOTICES

1. The authority citation for part 301 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 166, 7711, 7712, 7714, 7731, 7735, 7751, 7752, 7753, and 7754; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3. Section 301.75–15 also issued under Sec. 204, Title II, Pub. L. 106–113, 113 Stat. 1501A–293; sections 301.75–15 and 301.75–16 also issued under Sec. 203, Title II, Pub. L. 106–224, 114 Stat. 400 (7 U.S.C. 1421 note).

2. In § 301.78–3, paragraph (c) is revised to read as follows:

§ 301.78–3 Quarantined areas.

* * * * *

(c) There are no areas in the continental United States quarantined because of the Mediterranean fruit fly.

Done in Washington, DC, this 27th day of June, 2002.

Bobby R. Acord,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 02–16683 Filed 7–2–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9 CFR Part 94

[Docket No. 01–059–2]

Change in Disease Status of Greece With Regard to Foot-and-Mouth Disease

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: We are amending the regulations to add Greece to the list of regions that are considered free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease. We are taking this action because we have determined that Greece is now free of foot-and-mouth disease. We are also adding Greece to the list of regions that are subject to certain import restrictions on meat or meat products because of their proximity to or trading relationships with rinderpest- or foot-and-mouth-disease-affected regions. These actions update the disease status of Greece with regard to foot-and-mouth disease while continuing to protect the United States from an introduction of this disease by providing additional requirements for any meat and meat products imported into the United States from Greece.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 18, 2002.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Anne Goodman, Supervisory Staff Officer, Regionalization Evaluation Services Staff, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 734–4356.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals and animal products into the United States in order to prevent the introduction of various diseases, including rinderpest, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), African swine fever, hog cholera, and swine vesicular disease. These are dangerous and destructive communicable diseases of ruminants and swine. Section 94.1 lists regions of the world that are declared to be free of rinderpest or free of both rinderpest and FMD. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) considers rinderpest or FMD to exist in all parts of the world not listed. Section 94.11 of the regulations lists regions of the world that APHIS has determined to be free of rinderpest and FMD, but that are subject