

Despite receiving its fair share of [criticism from Californian industry](#), the U.S. Animal and Plant Health Service (APHIS) has made the decision to allow imports of lemons from Northwest Argentina.

The final rule will apply a systems approach to treating quarantine pests, and comes after the agency allowed an extra 120 days for the public to submit comments on the proposed arrangement.

In addition to safeguards including site registrations, grove sanitation, monitoring, pest control practices, fruit disinfection, pesticide treatment and inspections, APHIS has also ruled the fruit must be harvested green within a certain time period or treated for Mediterranean fruit fly in accordance with an approved treatment schedule.

"Publishing the final rule is just one of several steps that must be completed before Argentina may begin shipping lemons to the United States," APHIS clarified.

"APHIS and Argentina's National Plant Protection Organization (SENASA) must now finalize and sign the operational work plan, which details the conditions Argentina must meet for every U.S.-bound lemon shipment.

"Additionally, SENASA will have to collect and APHIS will have to verify six months of fruit fly trapping data. APHIS will also have to verify that packinghouses have met the safeguarding requirements outlined in the operational work plan."

APHIS said the rule had been sent to the Federal Register and would become effective 30 days after publication. The rule can be viewed [here](#).

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