


Peruvian blueberry exporters shipping to the U.S. now have a new treatment option available to mitigate for fruit flies, after U.S. authorities decided to allow the fruit to be irradiated. 

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) said the treatment would be allowed as an alternative to cold treatment or fumigation with methyl bromide.

The treatments are aimed at mitigating for the South American fruit fly (*Anastrepha fraterculus*) and the Mediterranean fruit fly (*Ceratitis capitata*) - the only quarantine pests of concern for Peruvian blueberries.

APHIS said Peru had requested authorization for irradiation treatment at approved facilities in the United States.

Regulations authorize irradiation as a treatment for all imported fruits and vegetables when the APHIS Treatment Manual specifies a treatment dosage that neutralizes the pests of concern for that commodity, the organization said.

In the case of Peruvian blueberries, the dose is 150 Gy.

"As a result, APHIS is amending the import requirements for blueberries from Peru to authorize irradiation at 150 Gy at approved U.S. irradiation facilities as an alternate treatment option, instead of cold treatment or methyl bromide fumigation," it said.

The change is effective as of March 13.

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