

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has authorized imports of fresh mangoes from Colombia, opening up the U.S. market to a major producer of the tropical fruit.

The pest risk assessment was made public in May this year and APHIS invited comments on the proposal. It received two comments, one from a Colombian government ministry and the other from the national plant protection organization (NPPO) of Colombia.

"We are advising the public of our decision to authorize the importation into the United States of fresh mango fruit from Colombia," APHIS said.

"Based on the findings of a pest risk analysis, which we made available to the public for review and comment through a previous notice, we have determined that the application of one or more designated phytosanitary measures will be sufficient to mitigate the risks of introducing or disseminating plant pests or noxious weeds via the importation of fresh mango fruit from Colombia."

Mangos are harvested twice a year in Colombia with one period of high and another period of low supply. Peak season happens between January and March, which would coincide with Peru's season and the start of Mexico's.

Under the regulations, the mangoes must be treated with an APHIS-approved treatment for *Anastrepha* spp. fruit flies and Medfly (*Ceratitidis capitata*), with is either hot water or irradiation.

The NPPO of Colombia must enter into an operational workplan with APHIS that spells out the daily procedures the NPPO will take to implement the below measures.

Only commercial consignments of mango fruit may be imported, and all growers must be registered with the NPPO and follow operational workplan requirements for suppression of fruit flies.

In addition, the NPPO must monitor the system for inspection, packing, wrapping, transportation, and loading of the commodity and ensure that participating growers are following the program guidelines.

Packinghouses must be registered and approved by the NPPO and meet the requirements listed in the operational workplan. The NPPO is also expected to maintain program records for at least 1 year and provide them to APHIS upon request.