

Phytosanitary procedures

Export certification and import compliance checking for potato tubers

Specific scope

This phytosanitary procedure describes export certification and import compliance checking for potato tubers.

Specific approval and amendment

First approved in 2006-09.

Introduction

Imported consignments of potato tubers may carry polyphagous or contaminating pests on the EPPO A1 and A2 lists of pests recommended for regulation (as listed in sections 2.2 and 2.3 of the Commodity Standard for Potato, PM 8/1). In order to avoid spread of these pests with potato, the consignments should be free from: (1) soil (tolerance 1% for seed potatoes, 2% for ware potatoes); (2) plant debris; (3) larvae, pupae or adults of insects; (4) eggs, juveniles or adult nematodes.

Consignment freedom should be verified both in the exporting and importing country by visual inspection and sampling of potatoes before the consignment is released. Tolerances for soil freedom are more stringent for potato tubers imported from certain areas where specific quarantine pests of potato occur (see PM 8/1).

Identification of lots

The composition of the entire consignment should be checked from the accompanying documents. The consignment may be considered as a single lot or may, if appropriate, be divided into several separate identifiable lots, each of which may be then subject to inspection and sampling.

For seed potatoes, each lot is composed of a single cultivar of the same category, class, origin and size. The integrity of the lot should be maintained throughout normal seed potato certification requirements. For further guidance on the identification of lots, see EPPO Standard PM 3/(in preparation) on lot identification.

For ware potatoes, the packing list should indicate separate lots by producer or packing station.

Clearance procedure in exporting countries

The NPPO of the exporting country should follow the procedures of ISPM no. 7 'Export certification system' and

relevant survey, inspection and laboratory testing schemes prior to certification. The importing country needs assurance that certified potato lots meet its entry requirements before export since quarantine pests may be difficult to detect during inspection at the point of entry.

The NPPO should have a register of potato exporters. Exporters should be fully informed by the NPPO of all requirements and conditions for export.

The NPPO of the exporting country should provide details, when required, on exporters and consignments in accordance with the requirements of ISPM 7 section 4.4, 'for each consignment for which a phytosanitary certificate is issued records should be kept as appropriate on: any inspection, testing, treatment or other verification which was conducted on a consignment basis; the names of the personnel who undertook these tasks; the date on which the activity was undertaken; the results obtained and any samples taken.' It should also be able to provide details of general action programmes that aim to eliminate or minimize the risk of quarantine pests in the production and storage phases. These include pest control actions, crop rotation, flooding, use of potato sprout inhibitors or other chemical treatments, washing, brushing, irradiation, and storage facilities and conditions.

The NPPO of the exporting country should be able to provide details of procedures for verification of origin and identification of lots. Trace-back of the lot to the farm level should be possible for seed potatoes.

Packaging requirements for exported lots should include the use of new packaging material for certified seed potatoes, and the use of at least clean packaging material for other potatoes, in order to avoid pest infestation or infection from these sources.

Information on identity and origin should be marked on the packaging. For seed potatoes, lots should be kept separate during the storage and packaging phases. Mixing of different lots or alteration of origin is not allowed, so that lots can be traced back to the grower. For other potatoes, provisions should be made for tracing back at least to the original packing facility,

Table 1 Suggested minimum sampling unit and inspection unit for various lot sizes of certified seed potatoes and ware potatoes

Commodity	Size of lot (unit of examination)	Minimum sampling unit	Inspection unit
Certified seed potatoes	< 50 tonnes	5 bags	200 tubers
	50–200 tonnes	1 bag per 10 tonnes	200 tubers
	> 200 tonnes	1 bag per 10 tonnes	1 tuber per tonne
Ware potatoes	when the entire consignment is < 30 tonnes (e.g. shipping container, lorry, rail truck) and may consist of more than 1 lot	5 bags minimum – if more than 1 lot, bags selected in approximately equal numbers from each lot – if more than 5 lots, 1 bag minimum per lot	total of 200 tubers
	30–50 tonnes	5 bags	200 tubers
	50–200 tonnes	1 bag per 10 tonnes	200 tubers
	> 200 tonnes	1 bag per 10 tonnes	1 tuber per tonne

Note: For bulk consignments or large bags, the whole consignment should be subdivided into identifiable lots, each of which then serves as a sampling unit. If this is not possible, the whole consignment should be taken as the sampling unit.

and preferably to the grower. Since it is difficult to assure the identity of loose potatoes, potatoes should preferably be packaged for export.

Inspection procedure in importing countries

Consignments for inspection should be identified initially by their phytosanitary certificates. Tubers may be inspected at the point of entry or at the point of destination. Facilities used should be suitable for inspection and sample selection, e.g. adequate lighting and equipment. Inspecting and sampling should be done while the potatoes are still in their original packaging.

An overall examination of the consignment, container, packaging and means of conveyance should be done in order to obtain any indication of adverse conditions (e.g. high or low temperatures, wetness) during transport, soil, plant debris, or live or dead insects on packaging or in the container. The physical condition of the potato tubers should be checked to ensure that there are no indications of rot or defects that may be caused by a quarantine pest.

Sampling procedures and sample sizes used for specific potato pests may also be used for general inspection. In Table 1 the 'lot' is the unit of examination (i.e. the unit which the inspection will pass, if it gives a negative result). Within a lot, bags of tubers are taken at random. These constitute the sampling unit. From these bags, a sample of at least 200 tubers is taken at random and inspected or tested. It is recommended that the minimum sampling unit is 5 bags per lot for small lots, with an increase in the sampling unit in proportion to the size of the lot for larger lots. As far as possible, the sampling units should be taken randomly from different parts of the lot, but bags showing suspicious signs (e.g. wetness) should be targeted.

Table 1 is for use when tubers are held in relatively small bags (20–50 kg). For bulk consignments or large bags, the whole consignment should be subdivided into identifiable lots, each of which then serves as a sampling unit. If this is not possible, the whole consignment should be taken as the sampling unit. For further guidance on sampling, see EPPO Standard PM 3/66 'Sampling for visual inspection of consignments'.

All selected tubers should be inspected visually tuber by tuber for external signs of infection or infestation and then cut one or more times beginning from the heel end in order to detect internal symptoms of pest infection or infestation. Soil from inspected bags or containers should be inspected and weighed. The general soil tolerance is 1% for seed potatoes, 2% for ware potatoes, unless a more stringent specific tolerance has been set. Similarly, plant debris and other inappropriate material should also be inspected. If appropriate, samples of soil, debris or other material should be taken to the laboratory for testing. For identification of specific pests see EPPO Diagnostic Protocols (series PM 7).

If a pest is found which the inspector suspects to be a quarantine pest, the lot or consignment should be detained under official control and samples taken to the laboratory for identification. When an unfamiliar pest is detected the procedures specified in EPPO Standard PM 5/2 'Pest risk analysis on detection of a pest in an imported consignment' should be followed to allow the NPPO to make a decision as to what phytosanitary action to take.

In the event of a quarantine pest being suspected or found the NPPO of the importing country should immediately inform the NPPO of the exporting country. The NPPO of the importing country should provide details of the import inspection, sampling and laboratory tests done on the imported lots.

Corrigendum

EPPO would like to update the reference in the following standards:

EPPO Standard PM 3/70 (1) Export certification and import compliance checking for potato tubers

In the section “Inspection procedure in importing countries”, 4th paragraph, the sentence “*For further guidance on sampling, see EPPO Standard PM 3/66 ‘Sampling for visual inspection of consignments’*” is replaced by “*For further guidance on sampling, see ISPM no. 31 Methodologies for sampling of consignments (FAO, 2008).*”

The following reference should be added to the reference list:

FAO (2008) ISPM No. 31, *Methodologies for sampling of consignments*, IPPC Secretariat, Rome (IT).

EPPO Standard PM 3/71 (1) General crop inspection procedure for potatoes

In the section “1.4 Inspection of harvested tubers (including tubers shortly before harvest and tubers presented for marketing)”, 1st paragraph, the sentence “*For further guidance on sampling, see EPPO Standard PM 3/66 Sampling of consignment for visual phytosanitary inspection and Battilani et al. (2005)*” is replaced by “*For further guidance on sampling, see ISPM no. 31 Methodologies for sampling of consignments and Battilani et al. (2005)*”

The following reference should be added to the reference list:

FAO (2008) ISPM No. 31, *Methodologies for sampling of consignments*, IPPC Secretariat, Rome (IT).

EPPO Standard PM 3/73 (1) Consignment inspection of *Fragaria* plants for planting

In the section “Sampling for visual inspection and laboratory testing”, subsection “Sampling for visual inspection (general aspects)”, 3rd paragraph the sentence “*The size of the unit of inspection (= minimum number of individuals to be examined) should be determined on the basis of lots taking into account the statistical background provided in EPPO Standard PM 3/65 Sampling of consignments for visual phytosanitary inspection*” is replaced by “*The size of the unit of inspection (= minimum number of individuals to be examined) should be determined on the basis of lots taking into account the statistical background provided in ISPM no. 31 Methodologies for sampling of consignments.*”

In the 4th paragraph of the same section and subsection the last sentence “*Sample sizes are indicated in Table 2(b) of EPPO Standard PM 3/65 Sampling of consignments for visual phytosanitary inspection.*” Is replaced by “*Sample sizes are indicated in Table 1 of ISPM no. 31 Methodologies for sampling of consignments.*”

The following reference should be added to the reference list:

FAO (2008) ISPM No. 31, *Methodologies for sampling of consignments*, IPPC Secretariat, Rome (IT).

References

- OEPP/EPPO (2006) Export certification and import compliance checking for potato tubers. *Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin* **36**, 423–424.
OEPP/EPPO (2007) General crop inspection procedure for potatoes. *Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin* **37**, 592–597.
OEPP/EPPO (2008) Consignment inspection of *Fragaria* plants for planting. *Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin* **38**, 396–406.