Biological Control Organism Permits

Last Modified:

A Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) 526 permit is required for the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of biological control organisms of plant pests and weeds. Read on to learn more about these requirements and how to apply for a permit.

What Organisms Need a PPQ 526 Permit?

Under the authority of the Plant Protection Act, biological control organisms regulated by PPQ include:

- Invertebrate predators and parasites (parasitoids) or competitors used to control invertebrate plant pests
- Invertebrate herbivores used to control weeds
- Microbial pathogens used to control invertebrate plant pests
- Microbial pathogens used to control weeds
- Non-pathogenic microorganisms used to control plant pathogens

When proposing the first-time environmental release of a biological control organism, specific procedures must be followed **before** applying for a permit. For more information, email us at ppqbiocontrol@usda.gov.

START HERE to apply for a PPQ 526 permit.

Log in to eFile

APHIS eFile is the online system to apply for and receive import and transit permits for plants, plant pests, soil, and agricultural products.

First time user? Create an account.

Permit Requirements for Microbial Pesticide Products

APHIS and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) jointly regulate the environmental release of certain micro-organisms. For more information on regulatory authorities and permit requirements for these organisms, visit Joint Regulation of Microbial Pesticide Products.

Organisms That Do NOT Need a PPQ 526 Permit

The following are examples of biological control organisms that typically do **not** typically need a PPQ 526 permit. However, they may be regulated by other Federal offices, agencies, or individual States.

- Genetically modified biological control organisms (require permits from APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services)
- Biological control organisms against pests, parasites or diseases, or vectors of diseases of vertebrates (including livestock, fish and pets)
- Interstate movement of microbial biocontrol organisms (biopesticides*) registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

* Biopesticides that are biological controls, according to APHIS, would be any registered pesticide used to control a plant pest, weed, or plant disease for which the active ingredient is a live microbial organism, including the metabolites of that organisms.

Related Resources

Stakeholder Consultation for Proposed Environmental Release of Novel Biological Control Agents

Review and comment on project summaries for proposed releases of novel biological control agents to support APHIS’ evaluation and permitting process.

USDA Advisory: Saltcedar and Tamarisk Leaf Beetles

Don't move tamarisk leaf beetles to control saltcedar! Doing so can harm native habitat and may violate the Plant Protection Act. Instead, learn about safe, approved saltcedar control options for your property.

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