



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Services (APHIS)

Plant Protection and
Quarantine (PPQ)

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Riverdale MD 20737

Voice: 301-851-2046

May 21, 2023

Dr. Ersin Dilber
General Director
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MinAF)
Eskişehir Yolu 9. Km Çankaya-Ankara
Türkiye

Dear Dr. Dilber:

APHIS is writing to respectfully provide MinAF with status updates on pending market access requests for fresh pomegranate, Bursa black figs, cherries, and melons exported from the Republic of Türkiye to the United States.

Pomegranates:

APHIS would like to express appreciation for MinAF's letter dated February 14, 2023, regarding the request to adjust the cold treatment (CT) schedule for pomegranates at 3 °C, 5 °C and 6 °C for durations of 14 days, 16 days, and 18 days, respectively. While we value your suggestions, we regret to inform you that we are unable to accept this request, as there is insufficient scientific evidence to support the efficacy of the proposed CT temperature in mitigating for the pests of concern (fruit flies) associated with fresh pomegranates. Please note that two approved phytosanitary treatment options are currently available for the mitigation of fruit flies associated with pomegranate exports to the United States. These include:

- Cold treatment in accordance with the APHIS treatment schedule (T107-a) outlined in the operational work plan previously shared with MinAF (enclosed).
- Irradiation treatment in the country of origin under APHIS supervision or upon arrival in the United States.

We would like to respectfully inform MinAF that the regulatory work for pomegranates from Türkiye to the United States is currently on hold because we are unable to proceed until an agreement is reached on the mitigation measures.

Bursa black figs and cherries:

Thank you for your letter dated July 1, 2020, informing us that the proposed phytosanitary irradiation treatment for fresh figs and cherries outlined in APHIS' letter dated July 10, 2019, has been deemed unacceptable by MinAF. However, it is important to note that all fresh figs and cherries exported to the United States, in addition to integrated pest management, must originate from either areas that are free of fruit flies or must undergo an appropriate phytosanitary treatment if they are sourced from fruit fly areas.

During a technical meeting with APHIS in December 2022, MinAF expressed interest in providing relevant data and information regarding the production of figs and cherries from fruit fly free areas. We look forward to receiving this data. Please note that we are

currently unable to advance the market access request for figs and cherries until we receive and review the necessary data and supporting documentation.

Melons:

APHIS appreciates receiving MinAF's letter dated January 25, 2023, declining the mitigation measures (insect-proof greenhouses) proposed in our letter dated October 5, 2022, due to the costs associated with implementing the mitigation measures. We would like to respectfully inform MinAF that the regulatory work for melons exported from Türkiye to the United States is currently on hold because we are unable to proceed until an agreement is reached on the mitigation methods or alternative effective mitigation options are provided to APHIS for further review and consideration.

APHIS values our collaboration with MinAF, and we look forward to continuing our successful resolution of plant health issues of importance to the United States and Türkiye.

Sincerely,



Ms. Jennifer R. Jones
Assistant Deputy Administrator
Phytosanitary Issues Management
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Enclosure (1)