

# AGRICULTURAL QUARANTINE INSPECTION (AQI) - APPROPRIATED

## PROGRAM PROFILE

<b>Goal</b>	To maintain the risk of introduction of invasive species into the U.S. at acceptable levels to protect American agricultural resources, maintain the marketability of agricultural products, and facilitate the movement of people and commodities across the borders.
<b>Enabling Legislation</b>	7 U.S.C. 151 et. seq. (Plant Quarantine Act of 1912), 7 U.S.C. 150aa-150jj (Federal Plant Pest Act of 1957).
<b>Economic Significance</b>	Protects the multi-billion dollar U.S. agricultural industry. Intercepts many of the world's most destructive pests and diseases. Tons of meat products from countries infected with FMD, African swine fever, and hog cholera are intercepted in baggage each year.
<b>Principal Approach And Methods</b>	Our AQI Appropriated program consists of preclearance activities and inspections at the Mexican and Canadian borders, and in Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Also, APHIS cooperates with the U.S. Customs Service and the Department of Defense to conduct military preclearance operations in all the major military commands. This involves inspection of troops and their personal gear and the cleaning of military vehicles and other cargo before their return to the United States.
<b>History</b>	Since the program began in 1913, the volume of cargo and air passenger traffic entering the country has increased dramatically, due to the global economy and free trade agreements.
<b>State and Local Cooperation</b>	Many States cooperate in carrying out various AQI program functions, particularly export certification.
<b>Involvement of Other Agencies</b>	Customs, Department of Defense, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service assist in inspection.

**RESOURCE DATA**

-----Obligations-----

	<u>Direct</u>	<u>Staff-Years</u>
FY 1997	26,580,823	514
FY 1998	27,173,796	540
FY 1999	31,211,774	546
FY 2000 (est)	34,546,000	586
FY 2001 (est)	38,450,000	618

	APHIS	Cooperators*	Total
Cumulative	\$9,027,473	\$114,223,891	\$123,251,364

- This figure represents the amount of cooperator funds contributed to all AQI activities -- appropriated and user fee.

## **RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR AQI APPROPRIATED AND USER FEE**

### **Passenger Inspections**

In FY 1999, APHIS inspected approximately 83 million passengers/pedestrians arriving in the United States, and predeparture and preclearance passengers in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and abroad. This is an increase of 7 million from FY 1998 and passenger arrivals will continue increasing. To address this increased traffic, APHIS opened two new, full-scale facilities on the U.S./Mexico border to conduct cargo, passenger, and pedestrian inspections.

To enhance passenger processing, we participated in a Border Passenger Processing Initiative. This initiative examines ways to expedite passenger processing while maintaining or increasing regulatory compliance. In FY 1999, we focused on improving customer service through compliance education and stakeholders meetings to increase awareness.

APHIS continued participating in Passenger Analytical Units, which target high-risk passengers. Also, we established dedicated commuter lanes at land border ports-of-entry on the northern and southern borders to accommodate frequent travelers between the U.S. and Mexico or Canada. As a result of these and other improvements, we have reduced the program's passenger clearance target to 20 minutes. In July 1999, the Consular Affairs of the State Department, Customs, Immigration, and APHIS signed the Border Agency Partnership (BAP). The BAP enhances border security through more seamless processing.

### **Baggage Screening**

APHIS maintained 59 trained beagle teams at 23 major U.S. airports and post offices. Also, we maintained x-ray scanning equipment for passenger baggage clearance at all foreign-arrival and predeparture sites, and at several land border ports on the Mexican border. Also, the Agency continued working with the U.S. Army to develop x-ray technology which can detect agricultural products based on atomic makeup and shape using neural network software. Also, APHIS worked with Vivid Technologies, Inc. to improve x-ray detection technology and enhance our automated baggage inspection systems.

**Cargo Clearance**

In FY 1999, APHIS inspected 70,968 ships and 837,931 cargo shipments entering the United States. Also, the Agency participated in the Automated Commercial System for the electronic transmission of cargo data to expedite processing of airport data. APHIS maintained electronic equipment at 33 maritime locations and 26 airports. Also, we continued to expand and improve an automated hold system for regulated cargo. APHIS continued working with Customs on the Automatic Targeting System. This system uses artificial intelligence techniques to rank shipments for inspection, facilitates trade by expediting tracking and enforcement of regulated commodities.

**Results Monitoring**

In FY 1999, APHIS instituted the AQI Monitoring System, which provides data on passenger baggage inspection. This system enables program managers to allocate resources to entry paths at high-risk for foreign agricultural items.

**Export Certification**

APHIS uses the EXCERPT system to facilitate export trade by providing certifying officials with export summaries which provide information for issuing phytosanitary certificates. In FY 1999, we expanded the system to include summaries for 4 new countries, increasing the total number of countries for which export certification data is available to 225.

**Preclearance**

In FY 1999, APHIS precleared 2,915,217 passengers and intercepted 73,061 pieces of contraband at the Bahamas and Bermuda airports. APHIS conducted preclearance inspections of fruits, vegetables, and propagative material in 28 countries.

**Regulatory Enforcement**

In FY 1999, APHIS conducted smuggling interdiction inspections and blitz activities at airports, seaports, land borders, and weigh stations. Also, we increased surveys of U.S. produce markets for prohibited products.