

Belize Agricultural Health Authority

BELIZE:

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

NO. 122 OF 2009

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REGULATIONS made by Belize Agricultural Health Authority with the approval of the Minister responsible for Agriculture in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by sections 35 and 86 of the Belize Agricultural Health Authority Act, Chapter 211 of the Substantive Laws of Belize Revised Edition 2000-2003; and all other powers thereunto it enabling.

(Gazetted, 2009)

CONSIDERING the importance of the citrus industry to Belize;

GIVEN the fact that it has been confirmed that the bacteria (*Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus*) that causes the devastating citrus disease known as citrus greening or huanglongbing is now present in Belize;

RECOGNIZING the fact that significant spread of this disease occurs due to the movement of plant material that is either infected with the bacterium or carrying the infected psyllid *Diaphorina citri*;

IT IS RESOLVED that immediate measures need to be implemented to restrict the movement of planting material (citrus and other hosts of the disease or vector) (except fruits) until officers of the Belize Agricultural Health Authority advise the Minister on the status of the disease in the country;

NOW THEREFORE, the following Regulations are made

Short title.

1. These Regulations may be cited as the

**BELIZE AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (NOTIFIABLE PLANT PEST)
(CITRUS GREENING) REGULATIONS, 2009.**

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Citrus
greening to
be reported.

2. Every person shall immediately notify the Belize Agricultural Health Authority of the presence or suspected presence of citrus greening in any area.

Restrictions.

3. (1) A person is restricted from moving

(a) any citrus planting material with the exception of fruits; and

(b) the species of the order *Rutaceae* that are known to be host for the bacteria that causes greening or the vector that spreads greening, including *Murraya paniculata* (orange jasmine) and *Artocarpus heterophyllus* (jack fruit).

(2) In order to reduce the possibility of further spread of the citrus greening disease, the movement of the citrus plants mentioned in subparagraph (b) above is restricted and movement may occur only in the following circumstances

(a) where nurseries are neighbouring the grove, planting of plants from the nursery within that grove will be permitted; that is, minimal movement of citrus plants will be permitted;

(b) where nursery owners or grove owners wish to move plants to a distance from the nursery location, owners must obtain a Plant Health Movement Permit from the Belize Agricultural Health Authority and movement of plants will be allowed to occur in strict compliance with the conditions stipulated by Belize Agricultural Health Authority in the Plant Health Movement Permit as prescribed in the Schedule to these Regulations.

Schedule.

(3) As at February 1st 2018 all citrus nursery plants produced in Belize are hereby required to be produced under a psyllid-proof screened structure approved by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority and in accordance with the Plant Protection (Citrus Certification) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 36 of 2000).

(4) For the purposes of sub paragraph (3), the following basic conditions shall apply

(a) the size of a nursery shall depend on the objectives of the nursery owner;

(b) the number of plants in a nursery shall not exceed the capacity of the nursery in a way that could impede official inspection or compromise the screen structure;

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- (c) the entire screened structure must be properly sealed with a screen to prevent the entry of psyllids;
- (d) the screen used shall be no less than a 50 mesh lumite type or similar mesh material;
- (e) a nursery structure shall have a two-door entry system which doors must be separated by a vestibule or anteroom;
- (f) the immediate area surrounding the nursery shall be maintained free of weeds and host plants.

(5) Citrus plants certified by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority to have been produced in accordance with subparagraph (3) shall be allowed to be moved and planted throughout the country.

(6) Certification of citrus plants as prescribed in sub-regulation (5) above shall be done by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority in accordance with the Plant Protection (Citrus Certification) Regulations 2000 (S.I. No. 36 of 2000).

Task Force.

4. (1) It is hereby declared that in the urgency of the situation a taskforce be appointed by the Minister responsible for Agriculture to develop national strategies and coordinate the activities of surveillance, eradication and management of the disease and its vector *diaphorina citri*.

(2) The task force declared to be appointed pursuant to subparagraph (1) shall be composed of

- (a) the Chief Agricultural Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture;
- (b) the Director of the Plant Health Department of the Belize Agricultural Health Authority;
- (c) a representative appointed by the Board of Directors of the Citrus Growers Association;
- (d) the Director of the Citrus Research & Education Institute;
- (e) a representative appointed by the Minister of Agriculture to represent citrus nursery producers;
- (f) a representative appointed from the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA);
- (g) a representative appointed from the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI);
- (h) a representative appointed from the University of Belize.

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(3) The task force may co-opt additional members who can provide specific expertise on an ad hoc basis.

(4) The responsibilities of the task force include

- (a) monitoring the data on the incidence and spread of the citrus greening disease and using the data make recommendations on immediate actions required to reduce further spread of the disease;
- (b) keeping abreast of the latest technological developments in the control of the disease and its vector;
- (c) fostering collaboration between local, regional and international agencies that have the capacity to provide support to control HLB-greening in Belize;
- (d) advising officials of the regulatory agencies and the citrus industry on the strategies required to minimize the spread of the disease and mitigate its impact on citrus production;
- (e) lobbying for political and other support to provide the necessary resources and regulatory frameworks necessary for strategy implementation.

Confiscation.

5. (1) Where the Belize Agricultural Health Authority is notified of the presence or suspected presence of citrus greening in a nursery owned or operated by a person, the Belize Agricultural Health Authority shall enter the premises and confiscate the plants reasonably believed to be infected.

(2) Plants confiscated pursuant to sub-regulation (1) shall be tested for the presence of citrus greening and plants which are confirmed to be infected shall be destroyed by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority at the expense of the owner of the nursery where the plants were confiscated from.

(3) Where a person moves citrus planting material and species or either of them of the order Rutaceae including *Murraya paniculata* and *Artocarpus heterophyllus* in contravention of these Regulations, the Belize Agricultural Health Authority shall confiscate the planting material and on pronouncement of liability of the person, shall proceed to destroy the planting material at the expense of the owner.

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(4) Without prejudice to any other penalty imposed under these Regulations, a person found guilty of contravening these Regulations shall not be allowed to host or produce planting material from the nursery found in contravention with these Regulations until the nursery is brought into compliance with the provisions of these Regulations and the Belize Agricultural Health Authority has recertified that nursery.

Inspections.

6. The Belize Agricultural Health Authority or its authorized agent shall carry out inspections of nurseries to ensure compliance with these Regulations.

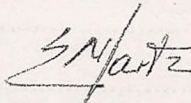
Offence and
Penalty.

7. A person who contravenes a provision or more of these Regulations is liable on summary conviction to a fine of not exceeding five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding two years or to both fine and period of imprisonment.

Commencement.

8. This Order comes into force on the *26* day of *October*, 2009.

MADE by the Belize Agricultural Health Authority this *26th* day of *October*, 2009.



(DR. EDWIN MARTINEZ)
Managing Director,
Belize Agricultural Health Authority

APPROVED by the Minister responsible for Agriculture this *26th* day of *October*, 2009.



(RENE MONTERO)
Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries

Belize Agricultural Health Authority

SCHEDULE

[Reg. 3(2)(b)]

Plant Health Movement Permit

No.....

BELIZE AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

TO:

Nursery Plant Movement Permit

Name and Address of Nursery/Company Making Request:.....

Date of Request:

Date for Movement:

Number of Plants:

Area to be planted (exact address):

Means of conveyance:

Botanical name of plant:

.....

(Signed)
Director of Plant Health
Belize Agricultural Health Authority

This is to certify that the plants described above have been inspected by appropriate procedures and are considered free for movement to the designated area described herein and they are considered to have conformed to the provisions described in these Regulations.