

Travellers Importing Orchids Update

June 15, 2006

When preparing to purchase orchids while travelling abroad, hobbyists must verify requirements beforehand then apply for a Permit to Import if required. The Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) is one way of obtaining accurate information of the latest requirements. <http://airs-sari.inspection.gc.ca/AIRS/airs-sari.asp>

At the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Import page, you can download forms needed to apply for permission to import orchids. <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/toc/importe.shtml#travoy>
Select Plant Health - Application for a Permit to Import to obtain the necessary guidelines.
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/for/pdf/c5256e.pdf>

For E-mail notification of new / revised policy directives including New or Amended Plant Protection Policy Directives, please make your selection (s) at:

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/tools/listserv/listsube.shtml?phpd-dppv>

Request for Release

You arrive in Canada by air with your precious orchids and with all the appropriate documentation but staff are not available to clear your plants. This can become a cause for panic if you are in transit and have a connecting flight. What to do? The good news is that wherever you arrive in Canada, you can reach one of the three Import Service Centres which can provide priority assistance to release your plants. Note that there is at least one ISC open 20 out of 24 hours in any day, 7 days a week. Optimally, the process should be completed within 20 to 30 minutes when you can continue your trip. *Note that there is a FEE for service rendered by the Import Service Centre. Canadian Border Services Agency can collect cash or an importer may have an account with CFIA in which case, that account number can be used. The traveller will need to indicate the method of payment on the Request for Release Approval.*

Central ISC (Ontario)

7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.(local time)

Telephone and EDI: 1-800-835-4486 (Canada or U.S.A.)

1-416-661-3039 (local calls and all other countries)

Fax: 1-416-661-5767

Release Form for Central ISC at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/for/pdf/c5272centraledie.pdf>

Eastern ISC (Quebec & Atlantic)

OPEN: 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.(local time)

Telephone and EDI: 1-877-493-0468 (Canada or U.S.A.)

1-514-493-0468 (local calls and all other countries)

Fax: 1-514-493-4103

Release Form for Eastern ISC at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/for/pdf/c5272easterne.pdf>

Western ISC (Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan & British Columbia)

OPEN: 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.(B.C. local time)

Telephone and EDI: 1-888-732-6222 (Canada or U.S.A.)

1-604-666-9240 (B.C. local calls and all other countries)

Fax: 1-604-666-1577

Release Form for Western ISC at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/for/pdf/c5272westerne.pdf>

You can also find the bilingual forms (Form 5272) at:
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/for/mpppe.shtml>

We recommend that you have completed forms for each centre **IN HAND** so that you can contact the one that is open when you urgently need it.

STEP 1 - Complete the form appropriate to the ISC being contacted. Have your Import Permit (if required for the particular origin), CITES Export Permit, Phytosanitary Certificate, and Suppliers Invoice in hand. *Note that the ORIGINAL Phytosanitary Certificate will need to be mailed to the selected Import Service Centre after clearance.*

STEP 2 - Fax the form and other documents to the selected ISC. (If no fax machine is readily available, request Canadian Border Services Agency personnel (Customs) to use their fax to transmit the information. Telephone the ISC to alert them that an urgent fax has been sent. We are assured that you will speak with a person and that your request will be expedited.

STEP 3 - Once your plants have been Released, continue your trip.

STEP 4 - Please bear in mind that your plants have been released but have not been inspected. There could be a follow-up inspection. *It is important to indicate the final destination address on the Request for Release Approval.*