

## USDA proposes removing blueberry fumigation requirement for two Chilean regions

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking comments on a proposal that would allow more Chilean blueberry growers to export their fruit to the U.S. without fumigation.

Currently, growers from regions where the European grapevine moth (*Lobesia botrana*, EGVM) is known to exist - the VI, VII, VIII, and XVI regions - must fumigate with methyl bromide.

The USDA proposal would allow producers in the VIII and XVI regions to export to the U.S. using a systems approach.

"The national plant protection organization (NPPO) of Chile stated that areas of low pest prevalence for EGVM exist in Regions VIII and XVI of Chile, and asked that we evaluate whether blueberries from these two regions could be authorized importation into the United States under a systems approach in lieu of fumigation with methyl bromide," the noticed said.

"In response to this request, we have prepared a commodity import evaluation document (CIED)."

The systems approach includes requirements for a work plan being agreed between the NPPO and the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the demonstration continued low pest prevalence for EGVM, and inspection of every consignment in the U.S.

Andrés Armstrong, executive director of the Chilean Blueberry Committee, told FreshFruitPortal.com via email that the USDA proposal was the result of years of continuous work between the public and private sectors that began as soon as the restrictions were announced.



"We're therefore very happy with new development in the implementation of this systems approach, which - once the administrative process is finalized in the U.S. - will allow various producers (not all) in the regions of Ñuble and Biobio to use this package of measures to avoid fumigation," he said.

He explained that it's desirable to avoid fumigation in order to reduce costs and the transit time to the market.

In addition, it's "great news" for organic growers in the two regions, as once the fruit is fumigated it can no longer be sold as organic.

**Lien** : <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/03/31/2020-06696/import-requirements-for-the-importation-of-fresh-blueberries-from-chile-into-the-united-states>

**Lien article :**

<https://www.freshfruitportal.com/news/2020/04/02/usda-proposes-removing-blueberry-fumigation-rule-for-two-chilean-regions/>

