



United States Department of Agriculture
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

May 12, 2020

Ms. Lindy Savelle
President
Georgia Citrus Association
203-201 West Jackson Street
Thomasville, Georgia 31792

Dear Ms. Savelle:

Thank you for your letter of April 17, 2020, on behalf of the Georgia Citrus Association, regarding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) decision to allow the importation of certain species of fresh citrus fruit from China into the United States.

I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns. China requested market access for five citrus commodities into the continental United States: pummelo, Nanfeng honey mandarin, ponkan, sweet orange, and Satsuma mandarin fruit. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) determined commercial shipments of these fruits can be safely imported into the United States when produced under a systems approach and accompanied by USDA import permits. This cohesive set of measures include the inspection and registration of production areas and packing facilities; export inspection and issuance of phytosanitary certificates; and inspection at the U.S. port of arrival, among others.

USDA is always concerned about the threats posed by invasive species to U.S. agriculture, and APHIS works actively to keep that from happening. APHIS based this decision on the scientific analysis detailed in our pest risk assessment and after a thorough evaluation of the public comments on that analysis. The analysis examines the plant pests and diseases that are known to be associated with a commodity and identifies those pests that are likely to remain on the commodity upon importation into the United States. The analysis also evaluates the mitigations that may be required to avoid, reduce, or eliminate the risk of pest introduction into the United States. Market access for any commodity is only granted when effective mitigations are available and can be implemented to minimize the risk of pest introduction. The systems approach determined for this market access request includes safeguarding measures across the production continuum to minimize the risk of introducing plant pests into the United States.

These measures must be implemented to import fruit into the United States. If the mitigations within the systems approach are not maintained, these citrus products from China will not be allowed to be imported into the United States.

We continue to value the Georgia Citrus Association's partnership with USDA in safeguarding United States' agriculture. For more information, please reach out to the Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs at (202)720-7095.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Perdue".

Sonny Perdue
Secretary

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