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Office of Congressional Affairs
202.344.1760

Pete Ladowicz
Assistant Commissioner

Kim M. Lowry
Deputy Assistant Commissioner

Branch Chiefs

Ashley Amos
– Budget and Appropriations

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– Field Operations and Intelligence

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– Border, Air, and Marine Operations

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CBP's Response to Hurricane Maria Continues

Hurricane Maria battered Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands when it made landfall on Sept. 20. Most of Puerto Rico is still without power and communications are limited. CBP continues to [send in flights](#) and resources to support the ongoing rescue and recovery efforts.

“CBP’s response has been urgent and extensive,” said Acting CBP Commissioner Kevin McAleenan in his [Oct. 10](#)

[Commissioner’s Blog](#) entry, “Nearly 150 CBP officers and agents have deployed to Puerto Rico to contribute to the relief effort, with additional resources on the way. We have distributed over 120,000 ready-to-eat meals, 260,000 bottles of water, and 500 generators, supporting our personnel, their families, and others impacted by the storms.”

McAleenan recently [traveled to Florida, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico](#) to survey hurricane damage and meet with CBP employees to hear about their challenges both personally and professionally.

For additional information on CBP’s response to Hurricane Maria, please visit CBP.gov or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

CBP Agriculture Specialists Find Wood-Boring Pests in Maritime Cargo



CBP agriculture specialists at the Houston Seaport [recently discovered](#) live larvae in foreign cargo prompting orders to immediately reload the non-compliant dunnage aboard the vessels. Cargo on maritime vessels is often positioned in place by wood packaging material, called “dunnage.” The International Plant Protection Convention, IPPC, requires that dunnage be fumigated or heat-treated to prevent the infestation of wood-boring pests. CBP agriculture specialists located at the Port of Houston inspected dunnage on the two vessels loaded with steel/metal products and discovered live wood-boring larvae specimens.

One vessel arrived from Brazil, Sept. 16, with the dunnage bearing IPPC marks; however, upon inspection, CBP agriculture specialists discovered live insect specimens identified as *Ips* sp. (Curculionidae). These insects are commonly called snout beetles, wood-boring pests

harmful to U.S. forests.

Several days later, CBP agriculture specialists discovered more live larvae specimens in IPPC-marked dunnage aboard a vessel carrying cargo from Russia and Ukraine. These larvae specimens were identified as *Cerambycidae* sp. of. These members of the *Cerambycidae* family, commonly called longhorn beetles, lay their eggs in the crevices of bark. The larvae bore holes into the wood.

The infestation of wood-boring pests causes damage to trees, making them susceptible to disease and ultimately causing death. These imported wood-boring pests could affect neighborhood trees, wildlife habitat and forestry. While the dunnage was required to be reloaded onto the vessels, the imported goods were allowed to enter into the United States.

CBP agriculture specialists work at U.S. ports of entry and international mail facilities to target, detect, and intercept these potential threats before they have a chance to do any harm. They work with specialized x-ray machines that detect organic materials and use [agricultural canines](#) specifically trained to sniff out meat and plant materials in [international airport passenger areas](#). Each year, CBP agriculture specialists intercept tens of thousands of “actionable pests” – those identified through scientific risk assessment and study as being dangerous to the health and safety of U.S. agricultural resources.

For additional information, please contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.



CBP Administers First Electronic Customs Broker License Exam

Today, CBP administered the [first electronic Customs Broker License Examination](#). The transition from a written to electronic exam is part of CBP's efforts to modernize trade operations.

"CBP is pleased to offer an all-electronic version of the Customs Broker License Exam to the more than 2,500 people who take the exam each year," said Brenda Smith, Executive Assistant Commissioner, Office of Trade. "The modernized exam will provide for faster exam results to examinees and quicker results on appeals while being more cost efficient for CBP."

CBP administers the Customs Broker License Exam twice a year. In June, CBP [announced](#) that the exam dates would move to the fourth Wednesday in April and October, and the fee would increase to \$390. Only U.S. citizens at least 18 years of age who are not employees of the U.S. federal government are eligible to take the Customs Broker License Exam. It is given at 48 locations across the country. Upon registering, applicants select their business port and then are assigned the exam location closest to their selected port.

According to Section 641 of the Tariff Act of 1930, a person must hold a valid customs brokers license and permit in order to transact customs business on behalf of others. Customs brokers are private individuals, partnerships, associations or corporations licensed, regulated and empowered by CBP to assist importers and exporters in meeting requirements governing imports and exports. Customs brokers must pass the exam in order to become licensed. There are currently more than 14,000 active customs brokers in the United States. To take the practice test or to find out more about becoming a customs broker, please visit [CBP.gov](#), or contact the Office of Congressional Affairs.

CBP Enforcement News



Officers Arrest MS-13 Gang Member

On Oct. 16, CBP officers at the Port of Nogales' DeConcini crossing arrested a previously deported MS-13 gang member.

Officers referred Jose Daniel Calderon-Canada, 29, for further inspection when he applied for entry into the United States claiming to be a U.S. citizen. During a secondary inspection, officers determined he was lying about his

citizenship. Subsequent records checks identified Calderon-Canada as a Mexican national and an MS-13 gang member with multiple deportations and an extensive criminal history. Officers arrested him for making a false claim to United States citizenship. He was then referred for federal prosecution.

Federal law allows officers to charge individuals by complaint, a method that allows the filing of charges for criminal activity without inferring guilt. An individual is presumed innocent unless and until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Visit [CBP.gov](#) for the full story.



Arrests Made After Subjects Flee

On Oct. 16, Tucson Sector Border Patrol agents from the Brian A. Terry Station arrested two Tucson area residents after they fled from agents responding to a citizen's report of a suspicious vehicle that was possibly loaded with narcotics. When agents attempted to stop the vehicle, it

sped off down a rural road.

Border Patrol agents followed the vehicle until the driver, in an attempt to evade arrest, drove off the road through a barbed wire fence into a field where the vehicle became stuck in a ditch. Agents arrested both occupants and found 91 pounds of marijuana inside the vehicle. The occupants are both U.S. citizens and are being held on federal drug smuggling charges, awaiting a disposition.

CBP welcomes assistance from the community. Citizens can report suspicious activity to the U.S. Border Patrol by calling 1-877-872-7435 toll free. All calls will be answered and remain anonymous. Visit [CBP.gov](#) for the full story.



CBP Intercepts Live Khapra Beetles

CBP agriculture specialists at the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport recently found live larvae in a package of jujubes. A traveler, arriving from Sudan, declared agriculture items after landing. CBP agriculture specialists inspected the traveler's luggage, which included over two pounds of jujubes (*Ziziphus* sp.). Jujubes are a small, date-like fruit commonly found in Asia and the Middle East. Jujube fruit is prohibited from entry into the United States from most countries due to the potential pest risk, as it is host material for a variety of pests.

Further examination of the traveler's jujubes resulted in the interception of 13 live larvae, which were identified and confirmed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, [Animal](#)

[and Plant Health Inspection Service](#), as Khapra beetle, *Trogoderma granarium* Everts (Dermestidae).

"Travelers can be assured that CBP's mission to protect our nation's agriculture is a top priority," said Dallas Area Port Director Cleatus Hunt, Jr. "CBP agriculture specialists work diligently to prevent pests and prohibited agriculture items from entering our country."

Khapra beetles can wreak havoc on grain products and seeds. They also have a high tolerance against insecticides and fumigants and are a significant [threat to the U.S. agriculture](#). The seized items were destroyed by steam sterilization. The traveler properly declared the items and therefore was not assessed a penalty.

Travelers are encouraged to visit [CBP.gov](#) to find out what food products they can bring into the United States. On a [typical day](#) in fiscal year 2016, CBP agriculture specialists discovered 404 pests at U.S. ports of entry and 4,638 materials for quarantine. These materials included plants, meat, soil and animal byproducts. Visit [CBP.gov](#) for the full story.

