

Southern Currents



Notice to the Area Port of New Orleans Trade Community

Date April 6, 2023

No.: 23-019c

Subject: Flighted Spongy Moth Complex (formerly AGM) Arriving Vessel Procedures Foreign [FSMC] Free Certificate Inspections

Purpose:

One purpose of this notice is to advise the local maritime industry of the importance of foreign FSMC (formerly AGM) free certification inspections. Secondly, this notice is to advise of changes to FSMC High Risk Flight Season date range and pest common name.

Background:

The Department of Homeland Security, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) have coordinated efforts to prevent the introduction of harmful insect pests into the United States. One such pest is Flighted Spongy Moth Complex [FSMC] (**formerly AGM**), an extremely invasive species of moth that has not been introduced into the United States and is not currently present in North America. The new name acknowledges the biological difference while maintaining the linkage to the new common name introduced by the Entomological Society of America. This pest is destructive to the ecology, may feed on over 600 plant species, and can seriously affect U.S. agriculture and forest resources. A FSMC infestation could result in the defoliation of environmentally important species. Dense populations of FSMC could cause economic and environmental damage. FSMC is presently known and well established in Northern China (including all ports north of 31° 15' N latitude; north of Shanghai), Japan, South Korea, and Far East Russia. **The FSMC Regions are: Northern China, Japan, South Korea and Far East Russia.** The female FSMC deposits egg masses during the high-risk flight season between May and October, and these egg masses are the most likely life stage to be found on vessels which have visited or transited high risk ports during the FSMC high risk flight season which has increased than previous years. **The FSMC High Risk Flight Season runs from May thru October.** This is a **change** from the previous

range of June thru September. Attracted by the lights on ships, the females may lay eggs on a vessel's superstructure.

A FSMC find on a vessel may require that the vessel be:

- Ordered into international waters;
- Required to undergo treatment;
- Re-inspected;
- Refused entry;

Procedures:

CBP recommends that all vessels that called ports in FSMC Regions during the FSMC High Risk Flight Season arrive with a valid foreign FSMC free certification. Updates to government websites, policies, forms, certificates, educational material etc., to reflect the new common name, are anticipated to take some time and may vary from country to country. Therefore, reference to AGM and Asian gypsy moth may continue to be seen during this time of transition and certificates using these names will continue to be considered valid if they have been issued by a recognized certification body. This certification may prevent CBP New Orleans from discovering FSMC infestations onboard vessels in port, thus **reducing the requirement for an infested vessel to be ordered removed from port for cleaning in international waters**. Captains of vessels arriving from FSMC Regions during the FSMC High Risk Season are encouraged to have vessel crewmen inspect their vessels for FSMC prior to arriving in the Port of New Orleans.

Vessels that called ports in FSMC Regions during the FSMC High Risk Flight season arriving at a CBP port without a valid foreign FSMC free certification pose a greater risk for FSMC infestations because FSMC required risk mitigation efforts have not been applied at the foreign port. However, vessels **will not** be denied entry into a CBP port because of a lack of a valid foreign FSMC free certification.

As a reminder, CBP will perform an FSMC inspection on all FSMC targeted vessels regardless of the vessel's foreign FSMC free certification status.

Previously, the vessel master, agent, owner, operator, or designee, was required to fax or e-mail a copy of the vessel's "Ports of Call" list to CBP prior to the arrival of *a vessel from a foreign or coastwise* port prior to arrival in the New Orleans Tri-Port. At this time, Ports of Call lists are **no longer** required to be submitted, unless CBP requests this information.

FSMC targeted vessels transiting directly to Baton Rouge will be restricted to one of the lower Mississippi River anchorages, as determined by CBP. CBP will notify the vessel agent of all FSMC related anchorage restrictions and will conduct the FSMC inspection

at the designated anchorage during daylight hours. CBP cannot conduct FSMC inspections during inclement weather.

Suspect FSMC Egg Mass Discoveries by Vessel Crew:

If a suspect FSMC egg mass is discovered onboard a vessel before arrival at the Port of New Orleans, the vessel agent/representative should:

- Inform the captain to have a crewmember carefully scrape off the suspect FSMC egg mass with a knife or paint scraper and place the suspect FSMC egg mass into the vessel's incinerator and incinerate the suspect FSMC egg mass.
 - **If the vessel does not have a functional incinerator, have the crewmember place the suspect FSMC egg mass into a Ziploc bag and place the specimen in a refrigerator. Do not freeze.**
- Notify the CBP Operations Desk at (504) 670-2270.

If a suspect FSMC egg mass is discovered while a vessel is in the Port of New Orleans, the vessel agent/representative should:

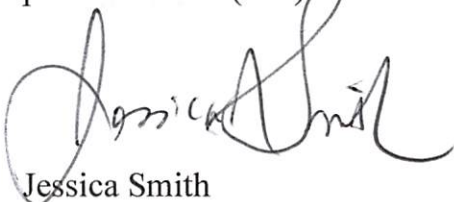
- Inform the captain to have a crewmember mark the area and **do not** remove the suspect FSMC specimen.
- Notify the CBP Operations Desk at (504) 670-2270.

A CBP boarding team will be dispatched to the vessel to conduct an FSMC inspection. If the Agriculture Specialist determines that a specimen is suspect for FSMC, normal FSMC protocols will be followed.

Note: If a suspect FSMC infested vessel is diverted to a foreign port before entering the Port of New Orleans, the CBP Operations Desk must be notified and the vessel crew should **place the suspect egg mass in alcohol and/or incinerate the specimen. Never throw a suspect FSMC specimen overboard.**

Effective Date:

The procedures contained in this notice are effective upon receipt. Please contact Supervisory CBP Agriculture Chief Jessica Smith at Jessica.Smith@cbp.dhs.gov at phone number (504) 670- 2270 with questions or concerns.



Jessica Smith
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