



# CUSTOMS & QUARANTINE AGENCY, GUAM

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*Director's Office*

*Director of Customs – Ike. Q. Peredo  
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## **Guam Customs Inspects Fresh Christmas Trees for Invasive Pests, Diseases**

BARRIGADA, Guam – Officers with the Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency's (CQA) Biosecurity Task Force (BSTF) oversaw the required fumigation of imported fresh Christmas trees and other evergreen products before they enter local shops, homes and establishments this holiday season.

The first shipping container and its contents were treated on Nov. 15. To date, six 40-foot shipping containers holding approximately 3,000 fresh trees, wreaths, garlands, and pinecones, in total, were fumigated.

Fumigation is necessary to help prevent the introduction of invasive pests, plant diseases, and other detriments to Guam's flora, fauna, finite natural resources, and agriculture.

### **Fumigation Process**

Officers first screen each container to ensure its contents meet entry requirements, and that the container is properly sealed and suitable for treatment. Caution tape is placed around a safety buffer zone before a calculated measure of methyl bromide gas is applied within the container. After the methyl bromide has sat within the container for the required period of time, officers conduct a final inspection of the container's contents to determine the success of the treatment.

The containers are released to consignees only after the completion of treatment and inspection protocols.

### **Potentially Invasive Pests, Vectors Prevented**

While this year's shipments carried no species or vectors of concern, fumigations in years past prevented the introduction of various species of insects, spiders, a rodent, garden snake, squirrel, and even the unique encounter of a skunk. When such organisms are found, they are turned over to the appropriate local or federal agricultural authorities.

In 2016, the Guam Invasive Species Council approved a Guam Department of Agriculture policy requiring that all imported Christmas trees be fumigated upon arrival to Guam.

For more information, contact CQA Public Information Officer Alana Chargualaf-Afaisen at [alana.c.afaisen@cqa.guam.gov](mailto:alana.c.afaisen@cqa.guam.gov) or 671-971-1408.

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