

Importing Orchids into Canada

Importing orchids from foreign growers requires various actions designed to protect Canada and Canadians:

- (1) Plants must be healthy and not carry pests or diseases that may harm agriculture, horticulture or wilderness.
- (2) Plants must have been obtained in a manner which promotes wildlife conservation.
- (3) In fairness to Canadian horticultural vendors, taxes must be collected on the value of the plants.

The following is a summary of the procedures the Canadian government currently uses (2004) to ensure the above for tropical orchids entering Canada. The appropriate agencies should be consulted for current policies and further details.

Protecting Against Pests and Diseases:

- Importer must obtain import permit from Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) which will state certification exporter must provide. See <http://www.inspection.gc.ca> for application forms and details. A fee will be charged for each import permit.
- Import permit required for all countries except USA. Import permit also required for states of HI, CA and OR in USA.
- No import permit required for small numbers of plants accompanying traveler from Hawaii.
- Orchids from any country other than the USA must normally be bare root. Orchids from OR, CA and HI must be bare root. Orchids grown on cork bark from certain countries may remain attached to the bark.
- Exporter must obtain phytosanitary certificate from authorities in exporting country. A fee will be charged to the exporter for this service and is frequently passed on to the customer.
- No phytosanitary certificate required for small numbers of plants accompanying traveler if originating from USA. Phytosanitary certificate required even in this case for plants from Oregon, California and Hawaii.
- Import permit and phytosanitary certificates are required for plants in flask from anywhere even if carried.
- On arrival in Canada:
 - o As baggage or by mail: customs inspectors will obtain inspection (if required) and process documents.
 - o By courier or air freight: Customs broker can be used to process documentation and arrange inspection. Otherwise obtain Request for Release Approval form from CFIA national service centre and FAX documentation. Returned request will note if inspection is required, if so, contact local inspection office. Fees will be charged for processing the paperwork and for the inspection, if necessary. Once Release is approved, customs will process and release plants.

Protecting Wild Orchids:

- Protection provided by Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) administered by the Canadian Wildlife Service, part of Environment Canada. See <http://www.cites.ec.gc.ca> for forms and details.
- Two categories of protection. Plants which are extinct or endangered in nature are referred to as Appendix I. All other orchids are referred to as Appendix II.
- Appendix I orchids are *Aerangis ellisii*, *Cattleya trianaei*, *Dendrobium cruentum*, *Laelia jongheana*, *Laelia lobata*, all *Paphiopedilum* species, *Peristeria elata*, all *Phragmipedium* species, *Renanthera imshootiana* and *Vanda coerulea*.
- Appendix I orchids require both a CITES import permit (distinct from CFIA import permit) and a CITES export permit.
- Appendix II orchids require only a CITES export permit issued by the exporting country. A fee will be charged to the exporter for this permit and is frequently passed on to the customer.
- Orchids in flask are exempt from CITES whether they are Appendix I or Appendix II.
- Artificially propagated orchid hybrids are Appendix II independent of the classification of the parent species.
- For importation of Appendix I orchids, consider importing flasks to avoid requirement for a CITES import permit.
- Vietnamese *Paphiopedilum* species, such as *vietnamense* and *hangianum*, have not been legally exported from their country of origin at this time, and the legality of import of these species is suspect. If imported retain all documentation for future reference.

Sales taxes:

- GST or HST on the value of imported plants will be collected by customs inspectors.
- No additional tariffs are charged on orchid plants imported from the United States, and other countries with "Most Favored Nation" status under tariff 0602.90.10.29.

A more detailed account of the regulations regarding the importation of orchids can be found on the Canadian Orchid Congress web site at: <http://www.canadianorchidcongress.ca/import.html>

Space prevents more detail here. The general "Orchid Culture" sheets in this series, available from your society or on the web at <http://www.canadianorchidcongress.ca/> provide further cultural information. For specific help with your orchids or further information join your local orchid society.

