

# Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection: 24-Hour turnarounds keep exporters coming to DATCP

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MADISON - Fast, accurate work by staff at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection helped get more than \$944 million worth of plant products to international markets in 2016, with soybeans, corn and wood products accounting for a good portion of the sales.

It's the second year running that the total value of plant product exports from Wisconsin has neared or topped \$1 billion.

Exporters need phytosanitary certificates - basically, health certificates - to assure national governments that the plant products coming into their countries meet all their requirements to prevent pest and disease transmission. DATCP's Bureau of Plant Industry issues the certificates after researching the requirements for the destination market and inspecting the products, if a federal inspector has not already done so.

In most cases, DATCP staff can issue a phytosanitary certificate within 24 hours of receiving the exporter's request if the products have already been inspected, or Wisconsin is free of the pests and diseases of concern for the nation receiving the products.

That speedy service is one reason the bureau issues so many certificates. Companies

exporting Federal Grain Inspection Service-inspected grain can get phytosanitary certificates either from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or from a state government. They choose DATCP because of its accuracy and quick turnaround, says Greg Helmbrecht, who heads up the plant export certification program.

In addition, he credits the pest and disease monitoring and laboratory work done by the Bureau of Plant Industry for keeping export markets open to Wisconsin plant products. This helps maintain Wisconsin's status as being free of many pests and diseases, which simplifies phytosanitary certification.

Soybean, corn and wood products accounted for 97 percent of the value of products shipped. Totals for commodities:

- Soybeans — \$445 million; 1.12 million tons; 2,185 certificates issued
- Corn — \$334.8 million; 1.9 million tons; 1,147 certificates issued
- Wood — \$139.3 million; 67 million board feet in logs and kiln-dried lumber and 67 million square feet in plywood and veneer; 3,026 certificates issued

All told, Wisconsin products accounted for \$420 million of the total certified by DATCP. Grains produced in the tristate area accounts for the remainder. All of the kiln-dried lumber and veneer products shipped were produced in Wisconsin.

About a quarter of the certificates issued were for products destined for China. In fact, Asian markets accounted for around 60 percent of the total certificates issued.

Exports in 2017 are on pace to at least equal 2016, with 4,341 phytos processed through May, compared with 9,432 for all of 2016. In 2015, DATCP issued certificates for products worth more than \$1 billion.