

- C000 General Information
- C020 Restricted or Nonmailable Articles and Substances

C022 Perishables

Summary C022 describes the normal transit time standards for mailing perishable goods, including live animals, furs, plants, and nonmailable plant pests. In addition, it provides preparation and packaging information.

1.0 TIME FACTOR

Mailable perishable matter may be sent through the mail only if it can reach its destination in good condition in the normal transit time between the mailing and address points. Mailable perishable foods that do not rapidly decay or generate obnoxious odors in the mail may be sent at the mailer's risk.

2.0 PREPARATION

Container Any container used to mail perishable matter must be constructed to protect and securely contain the contents.

2.1

Produce Fruits and vegetables are not mailable unless presented in dry condition.

2.2

Water Ice Water ice used as a refrigerant must be packed under C010 as though it were a liquid.

2.3

Dry Ice A parcel containing dry ice (carbon dioxide solid) must be packed in a container that allows the release of carbon dioxide gas. If a fiberboard box is used, enough insulation is necessary to prevent condensation and wetting of the mailing carton.

2.4

3.0 LIVE ANIMALS

Animal Fighting Prohibition [9-4-03] Under 7 USC 2156, the mailing of a live animal for the purpose of participating in an animal fighting venture is prohibited (regardless of whether such venture is permitted under the laws of the state in which it is conducted). The term *state* means any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any U.S. territory or possession. Violators can be subject to the criminal penalties in 7 USC 2156.

3.1

Day-Old Poultry Day-old poultry vaccinated with Newcastle disease (live virus) is nonmailable. Live day-old chickens, ducks, geese, partridges, pheasants (pheasants may be mailed only from April through August), guinea fowl, quail, and turkeys are acceptable in the mail only if:

3.2

- a. They are not more than 24 hours old and are presented for mailing in the original unopened hatchery box from the hatchery of origin.
- b. The date and hour of hatching is noted on the box by a representative of the hatchery who has personal knowledge thereof. (For COD shipments made by a hatchery for the account of others, the name or initials and address of the hatchery or the post office box number and address of the hatchery must be prominently shown for this standard.)
- c. The box is properly ventilated, of proper construction and strength to bear safe transmission in the mail, and not stacked more than 10 units high.



- d. They are mailed early enough in the week to avoid receipt at the office of address, in case of missed connections, on a Sunday, on a national holiday, or on the afternoon before a Sunday or holiday.
- e. They can be delivered to the addressee within 72 hours of the time of hatching, whether the addressee resides in town or on a rural route or highway contract route.
- f. The shipment bears special handling postage in addition to regular postage, unless sent at the First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rate.
- g. When live, day-old poultry is to be transported by aircraft, all provisions of the airline tariffs are met and air carriers have equipment available to safely deliver shipments within the specified time limits, allowing for delays en route in air and ground transportation.
- h. Day-old poultry, originally shipped by air express or air cargo and then presented for mailing, must be in first-class condition and prepared as specified in 3.2a through 3.2e.
- i. Boxes of day-old poultry of about identical size, securely fastened together to prevent separation in transit, may be accepted for mailing as a single parcel, if such parcel is not more than 100 inches in length and girth combined.

Small Cold-Blooded Animals

3.3

Small, harmless, cold-blooded animals (except snakes and turtles) that do not require food or water or attention during handling in the mail and that do not create sanitary problems or obnoxious odors are mailable (e.g., baby alligators and caimans not more than 20 inches long, bloodworms, earthworms, mealworms, salamanders, leeches, lizards, snails, and tadpoles).

Adult Fowl

3.4

Adult turkeys, guinea fowl, doves, pigeons, pheasants, partridges, and quail, as well as ducks, geese, and swans sent by Express Mail in biologically secure containers approved by the manager of Mailing Standards (see G043 for address) are mailable if the number of birds per parcel follows the container manufacturer limits, and if each bird weighs more than 6 ounces. Under the applicable standards, indemnity may be paid only for loss, damage, or rifling, and not for death of the birds in transit if there is no visible damage to the mailing container.

Adult Chickens

3.5

[9-4-03] Adult chickens must be sent by Express Mail. The Express Mail containers used must pass the standards in International Safe Transit Association (ISTA) Test Procedure 1A (detailed in Publication 2, *Packaging for Mailing*); be designed to remain intact during normal handling; be constructed to *totally* confine the chickens; contain shavings or other material to prevent damage to the bottom of the container; and be ventilated properly to ensure humane treatment in transit. The number of birds in each parcel must not exceed the container manufacturer's limit. Under the applicable standards, indemnity may be paid only for loss, damage, or rifling, and not for death of the chickens in transit if there is no visible damage to the container. The mailing of chickens for animal fighting purposes is prohibited under 3.1.

Warm-Blooded Animals

3.6

Warm-blooded animals, except the specified birds under specific conditions detailed above, are not mailable (e.g., hamsters, mice, rats, guinea pigs, rabbits, cats, dogs, squirrels, parakeets, and canaries).

Pacific Islands

3.7

Animals mailed to the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia require a permit issued by the government of the destination country.

- Bees**
3.8 Bees are acceptable in the continental surface mail when shipped under federal and state regulations to ensure that they are free of disease. Packages of honeybees must bear special handling postage, except those sent at a First-Class Mail rate. Only queen honeybees may be shipped via air transportation. Each queen honeybee shipped via air transportation may be accompanied by up to eight attendant honeybees.
- Other Insects**
3.9 Other live, nonpoisonous, and nondisease-conveying insects may be sent through the mail when properly prepared for mailing and when shipped under regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Such insects mailed to the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia are also subject to the regulations of the destination country.
- Live Scorpions**
3.10 Live scorpions that are to be used for medical research or the manufacture of antivenin are accepted only in the continental surface mail when packaged in a double mailing container, both parts of which are closed or fastened to prevent escape of the scorpions. The inner container must be of material that cannot be punctured by the scorpions and must be plainly marked "Live Scorpions." Cushioning material must be used when necessary to prevent shifting of the inner container. The outer container must be strong enough to prevent crushing of the package or exposure of the contents during normal handling in the mail. The outer container must be plainly marked "Live Scorpions."
- Packaging**
3.11 Any mailing container used for mailable animals must be made of at least 275-pound test, double wall, corrugated, weather-resistant fiberboard (W5c) or equivalent and must be adequately ventilated. The container must be constructed to prevent escape of the animals while in the mail and to preclude the container and its contents from being crushed in normal handling. The outside of the container must include a return address and a description of the contents. A container marked "If Undeliverable, Abandon" is not accepted.
- Acceptance**
3.12 The USPS does not accept any shipment of animals that the USPS reasonably believes cannot reach its destination in a viable condition. Such a determination is based on factors including the expected temperatures (weather conditions) while the shipment is in the mail; the types of vehicles on which the shipment is to be transported; the expected transit time; and the types of packaging used for protection against suffocation, crushing, and handling.
- Disposal**
3.13 Any parcel of live animals that cannot be delivered to the addressee or returned to the sender within 72 hours (for live day-old poultry) or within the delivery period marked on the parcel (for other animals) is immediately disposed of under the relevant standards. A parcel not marked with the delivery period is disposed of immediately if it reasonably appears that the animals cannot be returned to the sender in a viable condition.

4.0 DEAD WILD ANIMALS

The dead bodies, or parts thereof, of any wild animals, wild birds, or eggs are acceptable for mailing only when they are lawfully killed or taken, and their shipment is not prohibited by law of the United States or of the state, territory, district, or foreign country or subdivision thereof in which killed or taken or offered for shipment. Mailing of fresh game is also subject to these standards.



5.0 FURS, HIDES, SKINS, AND PELTS

General
5.1 A parcel containing the fur, hide, skin, or pelt of a wild animal is mailable only if the matter is properly dried or cured and has no offensive odor, and only if the parcel is plainly marked, labeled, or tagged on the outside with the names and addresses of the shipper and addressee. The parcel must bear any endorsement required by state laws.

Wrapping
5.2 Hides and pelts must be wrapped when necessary to prevent damage to other mail.

6.0 MAILING PLANTS

Mailability
6.1 In general, plants and plant products are mailable within the United States and its territories and possessions, subject to certain prohibitions imposed under U.S. agriculture and conservation statutes. To the extent specified below, when such prohibitions make shipment of plants or plant products unlawful, those articles constitute nonmailable matter. More detailed information is in Publication 14, *Prohibitions and Restrictions on Mailing Animals, Plants, and Related Matter*.

Nonmailable Quarantined Matter
6.2 Under 39 USC 3014(b), any plant, plant product, or other article capable of carrying a dangerous plant disease or insect infestation is nonmailable from a quarantined area, if shipping such item by common carrier is prohibited by a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) quarantine issued under 7 USC 161, except, any such item is mailable from a quarantined area if:

- a. Its movement by common carrier is allowed under conditions prescribed in the quarantine notice or in other USDA regulations, issued under 7 USC 161, governing its inspection, disinfection, certification, and other conditions for its movement.
- b. Its movement by mail complies with all such conditions.

Additional Quarantined Matter
6.3 Any plant, article, or matter, the importation or interstate shipment of which is prohibited under the Act of August 20, 1912 (37 Stat. 315, chapter 308; 7 USC 151 et seq.), commonly known as the Plant Quarantine Act, is made nonmailable by 39 USC 3015(c).

Illegally Taken Plants
6.4 Any plant, the conveyance of which is prohibited under section 3 of the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 (16 USC 3372), is made nonmailable by 39 USC 3015(d).

Criminal Penalties
6.5 18 USC 1716B provides criminal penalties for mailing anything nonmailable under 39 USC 3014(b), unless the item is excepted under USPS regulations. 18 USC 1716D provides criminal penalties for mailing anything nonmailable under 39 USC 3015(c) and (d).

USDA Notices and Regulations
6.6 USDA quarantine notices, issued under 7 USC 161, are published in the *Federal Register* and codified in 7 CFR (e.g., 7 CFR 301 and 318). Details on these and other USDA regulations may be obtained by writing to the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Programs (see [G043](#) for address).

7.0 NONMAILABLE PLANT PESTS, INJURIOUS ANIMALS, AND ILLEGALLY TAKEN FISH OR WILDLIFE

- Nonmailable Matter** More detailed information is in Publication 14. Under the respective provisions of 39 USC 3015(a), (b), and (d), the following items are nonmailable:
- 7.1
- a. Any injurious animal, the importation or interstate shipment of which is prohibited under 18 USC 42.
 - b. Any plant pest, the movement of which is prohibited under section 103 or 104 of the Federal Plant Pest Act (7 USC 150bb or 150cc).
 - c. Any fish or wildlife, the conveyance of which is prohibited under section 3 of the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 (16 USC 3372).
- Criminal Penalties** 18 USC 1716D provides criminal penalties for mailing anything nonmailable under 39 USC 3015(a), (b), or (d).
- 7.2

