

Contrary to what many may think, acquiring ants from out of state is not difficult and anyone can apply for the required permits to import and own exotic ants. The application process is simple and free and allows for the possibility of keeping new and interesting species one couldn't normally acquire.

Aside from *Pogonomyrmex occidentalis*, all members of the Formicidae (ant) family are legally classified as plant pests and thus restricted from interstate transport as per the Plant Protection Act of 2000. To legally move ants across state lines one must have a PPQ 526 permit on file with the USDA's plant and animal health department, APHIS.

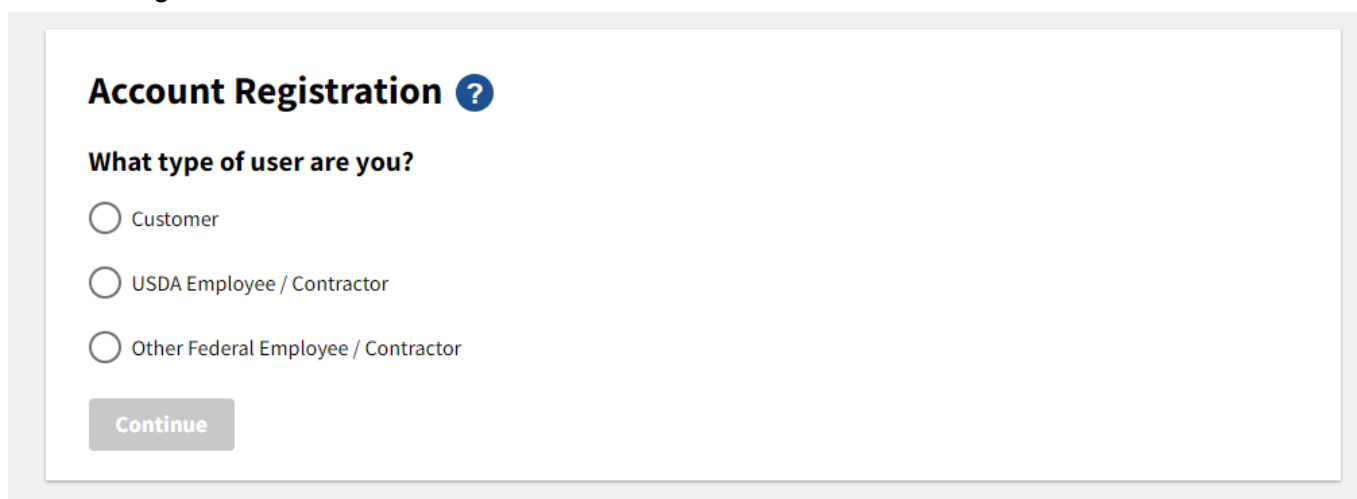
Creating an E-Authentication Account

To apply for a permit one must first create an Eauthentication account, found here:

<https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/registration>

After clicking on the link, follow the instructions exactly:

- 1) After clicking on the link, select Customer

A screenshot of the USDA eAuthentication Account Registration page. The page has a white background with a light gray border. At the top, it says "Account Registration" in bold black text, followed by a blue question mark icon. Below this, it asks "What type of user are you?" in bold black text. There are three radio button options: "Customer", "USDA Employee / Contractor", and "Other Federal Employee / Contractor". The "Customer" option is selected. At the bottom left, there is a gray button labeled "Continue".

- 2) Enter your email address and wait for the confirmation

- 3) After Filling out your account information you should receive a confirmation email.

Thanks for requesting a USDA eAuthentication account. Please click the link below or right-click on 'Continue Registration', copy the hyperlink and paste it into your browser.

Continue Registration

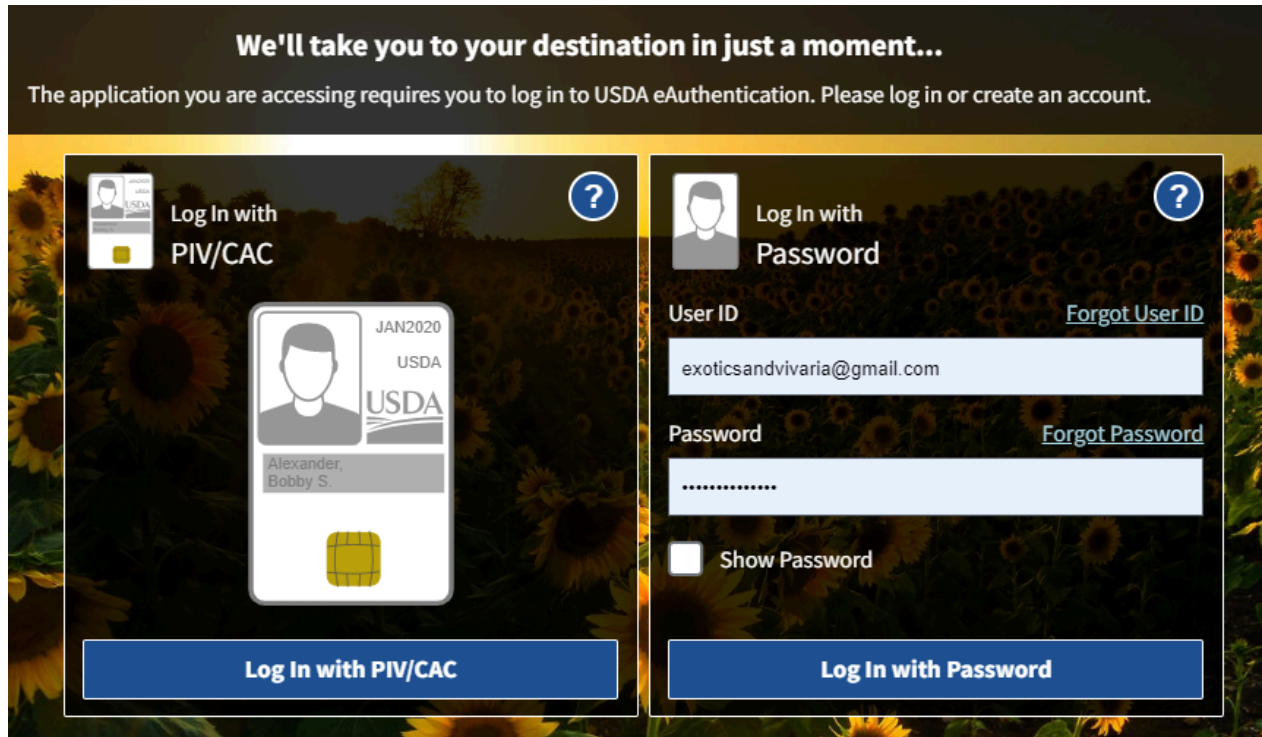
This link will expire soon.

Please do not reply to this message.

For more help, visit <https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/faq>

- 4) Return to the login screen:

<https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/login?TARGET=-SM-https:%2F%2Fwww.eauth.usda.gov%2Feauth%2Fb%2Fusda%2Fupdateaccount>

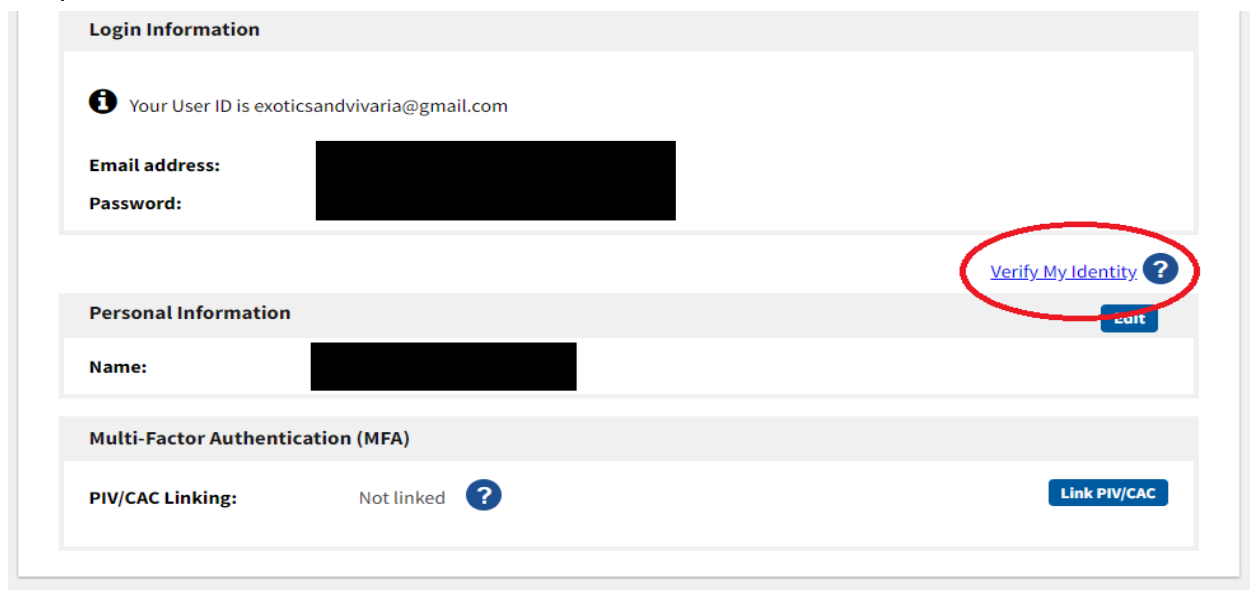


The login screen features a dark background with a sunflower field. At the top, a banner reads "We'll take you to your destination in just a moment..." followed by the instruction: "The application you are accessing requires you to log in to USDA eAuthentication. Please log in or create an account."

There are two main login options:

- Log In with PIV/CAC:** This option includes a visual representation of a PIV/CAC card. The card shows the name "Alexander, Bobby S.", the date "JAN2020", and the "USDA" logo. Below the card is a blue button labeled "Log In with PIV/CAC".
- Log In with Password:** This option includes input fields for "User ID" (containing "exoticsandvivaria@gmail.com") and "Password" (masked with dots). There are links for "Forgot User ID" and "Forgot Password". A checkbox labeled "Show Password" is also present. Below these fields is a blue button labeled "Log In with Password".

- 5) Immediately upon logging in for the first time, select "verify my identity" and complete the verification process to fully activate your account, do not skip this step, this system is very new (as of 7/20) and seems to be a bit buggy, you will not be able to fully use your account until this step has been completed.



The user profile setup screen is divided into three main sections:

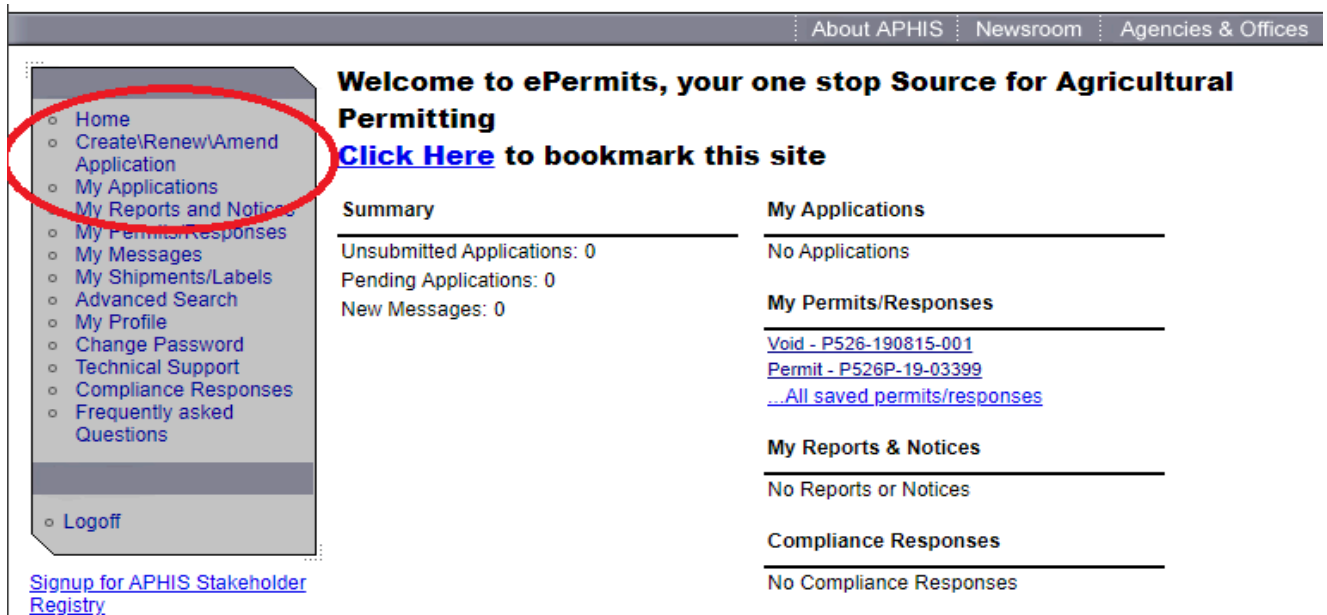
- Login Information:** Displays the user ID "exoticsandvivaria@gmail.com". Below this are fields for "Email address:" and "Password:", both of which are redacted with black boxes.
- Personal Information:** Includes a "Name:" field, which is also redacted. To the right of this section is a blue "Edit" button.
- Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA):** Shows the status "PIV/CAC Linking: Not linked" with a question mark icon. A blue button labeled "Link PIV/CAC" is located to the right.

A red circle highlights the "Verify My Identity" link, which is accompanied by a question mark icon, located in the top right corner of the "Login Information" section.

- 6) As of now (8/20) this is still the link for the 526 form once your eauthentication account is activated, but the entire USDA system is currently being overhauled so I am unsure for how long this link will remain valid:

<https://epermits.aphis.usda.gov/epermits/index.cfm?CFID=186323&CFTOKEN=45c50eb9f348bc6f-308184CF-FDC2-F14D-DA6280227D5C2761&ACTION=applicantHome>

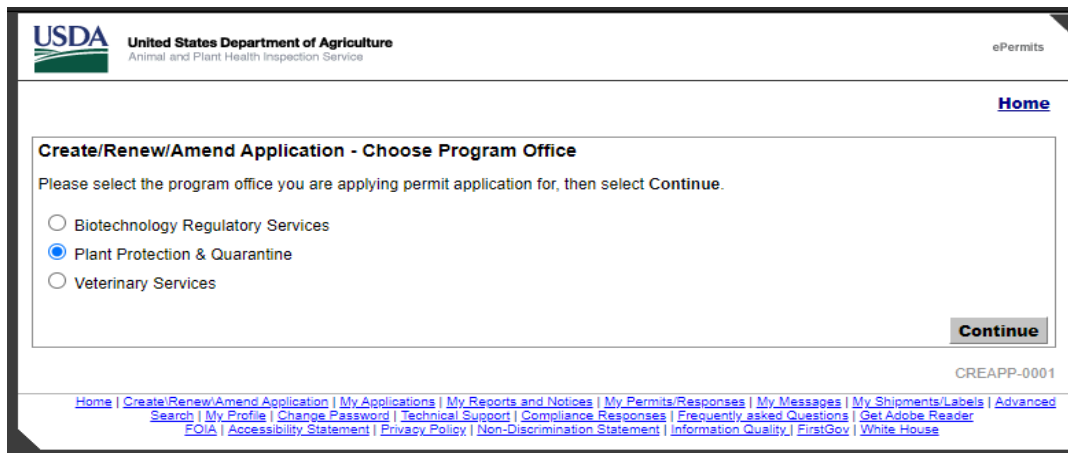
- 7) After clicking on the link, you should be prompted to log in and should then find yourself at your permit dashboard/hub. Congratulations! You can now actually apply for a permit. Select “Create/Renew/Amend Application” to begin the actual application process.



The screenshot shows the ePermits dashboard. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About APHIS, Newsroom, and Agencies & Offices. The main heading is "Welcome to ePermits, your one stop Source for Agricultural Permitting". Below this, there is a link "Click Here to bookmark this site". The dashboard is divided into three main sections: Summary, My Applications, and My Permits/Responses. The Summary section shows: Unsubmitted Applications: 0, Pending Applications: 0, and New Messages: 0. The My Applications section shows: No Applications. The My Permits/Responses section shows: Void - P526-190815-001, Permit - P526P-19-03399, and a link to All saved permits/responses. The My Reports & Notices section shows: No Reports or Notices. The Compliance Responses section shows: No Compliance Responses. On the left side, there is a sidebar with a list of links: Home, Create/Renew/Amend Application (highlighted with a red circle), My Applications, My Reports and Notices, My Permits/Responses, My Messages, My Shipments/Labels, Advanced Search, My Profile, Change Password, Technical Support, Compliance Responses, Frequently asked Questions, and Logoff. At the bottom left, there is a link to Sign up for APHIS Stakeholder Registry.


Applying for a PPQ526 Permit

1. After selecting “Create/Renew/Amend Application” select “Plant Protection and Quarantine”



The screenshot shows the USDA ePermits application form. At the top, there is the USDA logo and the text "United States Department of Agriculture" and "Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service". The page is titled "ePermits" and "Home". The main heading is "Create/Renew/Amend Application - Choose Program Office". Below this, there is a instruction: "Please select the program office you are applying permit application for, then select Continue." There are three radio buttons: Biotechnology Regulatory Services, Plant Protection & Quarantine (selected), and Veterinary Services. A "Continue" button is at the bottom right. At the bottom, there is a footer with links: Home, Create/Renew/Amend Application, My Applications, My Reports and Notices, My Permits/Responses, My Messages, My Shipments/Labels, Advanced Search, My Profile, Change Password, Technical Support, Compliance Responses, Frequently asked Questions, Get Adobe Reader, FOIA, Accessibility Statement, Privacy Policy, Non-Discrimination Statement, Information Quality, FirstGov, and White House. The page number "CREAPP-0001" is also visible.

2. Select PPQ 526 from the list of available permits, it should be the second option

**United States Department of Agriculture**
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

ePermits

[Home](#)

Create/Renew/Amend Application - Choose Application Type for PPQ

You have selected Plant Protection & Quarantine (PPQ) as the program office. If this is correct, please select the correct application type for the permit you are applying for, then select Continue. If you have selected an incorrect program office you may go back by using the browser "Back" button.

- ☐ PPQ 525A Application for Permit to Receive Soil
- ☒ PPQ 526 Permit to Move Live Plant Pests, Biological Control Agents, Bees, Parasitic Plants, Federal Noxious Weeds, or Soil
- ☐ PPQ 546 Agreement for Postentry Quarantine State Screening Notice
- ☐ PPQ 585 Application for Permit to Import Timber or Timber Products
- ☐ PPQ 586 Application for Permit to Transit Plants and/or Plant Products, Plant Pests, and/or Associated Soil Through the United States
- ☐ PPQ 587 Application for Permit to Import Plants and Plant Products
- ☐ PPQ 588 Application for Controlled Import Permit to Import Restricted or Not Authorized Plant Material
- ☐ PPQ 621 Application for Protected Plant Permit to Engage in the Business of Importing, Exporting, or Re-exporting Terrestrial Plants or Plant Products that are Protected

We need your valuable feedback to help us evaluate and improve our customer service. Please select the following link to take our brief customer service survey: <http://ppqcustserv.questionpro.com>

Continue

3. Select "No" when asked if the organism in question is considered a bioweapon

Create Application - Select Agent Confirmation

Is this an application to move or import select agents, the genes expressing select agents, or the toxins made by the select agents?

- ☒ No. This is NOT an application to move or import select agents.
- ☐ Yes. This is an application to move or import select agents.

The Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002, as part of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness Response Act of 2002, requires entities that possess, use, or transfer agents or toxins deemed a severe threat to animal or plant health or products must notify and register with APHIS. This law is designed to improve the ability of the United States to prevent, prepare for, and respond to bioterrorism and other public health emergencies that could threaten public health and safety or American agriculture.

The following is a list of select agents and toxins which PPQ has considered select agents:

- Coniothyrium glycines
- Peronosclerospora philippinensis (Peronosclerospora sacchari)
- Phoma glycinicola (Pyrenochaeta glycines)
- Ralstonia solanacearum
- Rathayibacter toxicus
- Sclerophthora rayssiae
- Synchytrium endobioticum
- Xanthomonas oryzae

Additional information regarding the USDA Select Agent Program can be found at:

- <http://www.selectagents.gov/SelectAgentsandToxins.html>
- <http://www.selectagents.gov>

4. Unless amending a current application, select “New”

page.

If someone else in your organization requested the previous permit, they can submit an “amendment or renewal with changes” application in ePermits requesting that their permit be transferred to your eAuthentication account. A specialist will review their request and either transfer their permit to your eAuthentication account or guide you further. Please note that in order to do this that both individuals will need a “Verified” eAuthentication account.

☒ New ☐ Amendment ☐ Renewal Without Changes ☐ Renewal With Changes

Select Permit: -- Select -- v

[Display Selected Permit](#)

Continue

5. Select “No, this application does not require confidential business information, unless of course it does so.

Create Application - Confidential Business Information Confirmation

PPQ 526 Permit to Move Live Plant Pests, Biological Control Agents, Bees, Parasitic Plants, Federal Noxious Weeds, or Soil

Does this application contain Confidential Business Information (CBI)? (Please choose carefully, as this choice cannot be reversed later)

- ☒ No. This application does NOT contain Confidential Business Information.
- ☐ Yes. This application DOES contain Confidential Business Information.

Tips for Entering CBI Data:

While completing your permit application, please remember to surround information which you want to protect as CBI with square brackets ([]).

For example, the scientific name of the plant pest you wish to protect would appear as follows:

Scientific Names of Pests to be Moved: [Botrytis cinerea]

The CBI-deleted version of this scientific name would automatically be generated by ePermits using the square brackets to display it:

Scientific Names of Pests to be Moved: []

Please review the [PPQ526 CBI Guidance](#) document. To proceed with an application containing CBI, a Justification Letter on letterhead will be required.

Continue

6. Fill out the Applicant information and then select enter new article

Application No. 796283

Applicant **Articles** Origination Points Destination Proposed Measures Attachments Certify & Submit

Article Summary

Select Enter New Article to start entering the first article.

No Records Found

Enter New Article

PPQ526-000-002

7. Select the collection location, if the species is found in another state select Originally collected from within the Continental U.S. State the intended use and type in or select the organism from the menu.

Select or Enter Regulated Article

* Indicates a required field

Where was the Article originally collected?*

Origin Explanation:

Intended Use:*

If Other for Intended Use, describe with as much detail as possible:

(Max. 1000 Characters)

8. Fill out which stages of life the colony will be in, along whether they will be shipped with any accompanying media.
(apart from a standard test tube). For host material select none.

Article - Edit Detail

* Indicates a required field

Subspecies:

Life Stage(s):*

Check all that apply

9. When you have completed all the questions and reviewed them “select done entering articles”

Applicant **Articles** Origination Points Destination Proposed Measures Attachments Certify & Submit

Article Summary

Edit	Total Articles	Intended Use	Life Stage(s)	Copy	Delete
	1	Educational Use	Adult, Egg, Larvae, Pupae		

Enter New Article

Done Entering Articles

PPQ526-005.892

[Home](#) | [Create/Reopen/Amend Application](#) | [My Applications](#) | [My Reports and Notices](#) | [My Records/Responses](#) | [My Messages](#) | [My Comments/Labels](#) | [Advanced](#)

10. You must now select what type of movement is taking place, if the ants are being shipped in from another state, select Interstate Movement, if they are from another country select Importation.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Origination Points - Movement Type". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Applicant, Articles, Origination Points (highlighted in blue), Destination, Proposed Measures, Attachments, and Certify & Submit. Below the navigation bar, the form contains a legend: "* Indicates a required field". There are two main input fields: "Movement Type:" with a dropdown menu currently showing "-- Select --", and "Approximate Date(s) of Initial Import or Movement:" with a text box containing "09/2020". A "Continue" button is located at the bottom right of the form. Below the form, the text "PPQ526-003-010" is displayed, followed by a long list of links including Home, Create/Renew/Amend Application, My Applications, My Reports and Notices, My Permits/Responses, My Messages, My Shipments/Labels, Advanced Search, My Profile, Change Password, Technical Support, Compliance Responses, Frequently asked Questions, and Get Adobe Reader.

11. Now select "Multiple Countries/States/Origin Points" (this allows you to be broader with your intended supplier location) Then choose your origin points, you can be as broad as simply selecting "continental us"

12. When you are finished select: "done with origin points"

PPQ 526 Permit to Move Live Plant Pests, Biological Control Agents, Bees, Parasitic Plants, Federal Noxious Weeds, or Soil

Importation

Application No. 796283

The screenshot shows a progress bar at the top with steps: Applicant, Articles, Origination Points (highlighted in blue), Destination, Proposed Measures, Attachments, and Certify & Submit. Below the progress bar, the section is titled "Importation - Origination Points Summary". It displays "No Records Found". Below this, there are four buttons: "Change Movement Type", "Multiple Countries/Continents", "Single Location", and "Done With Origination Points" (which is circled in red). The text "PPQ526-003-008" is visible at the bottom right. At the very bottom, there is a long list of links including Home, Create/Renew/Amend Application, My Applications, My Reports and Notices, My Permits/Responses, My Messages, My Shipments/Labels, Advanced Search, My Profile, Change Password, Technical Support, Compliance Responses, Frequently asked Questions, Get Adobe Reader, FOIA, Accessibility Statement, Privacy Policy, Non-Discrimination Statement, Information Quality, FirstGov, and White House.

13. Then select "enter new proposed measure" to begin discussing your containment measures for the ants


The screenshot shows a progress bar at the top with steps: Applicant, Articles, Origination Points, Destination, Proposed Measures (highlighted in blue), Attachments, and Certify & Submit. Below the progress bar, the section is titled "Proposed Measures Summary". It contains the text "Click 'Enter New Proposed Measure' to start entering the first measure." Below this text, there are two buttons: "Enter New Proposed Measure" (which is circled in red) and "Done With Proposed Measures". The text "PPQ526-008-019" is visible at the bottom right.

14. When finished, select finished with proposed measures to move to the attachments section, If you have pictures of your proposed setup now where you can attach them.

Application Articles Points **Measures** Attachments Submit

Proposed Measures Summary

Check boxes to remove one or more Proposed Measures.

Edit	Regulated Article	Measure Type	Measure(s)	Delete
	Harpegnathos venator	Escape Prevention	Mesh Other: Locked Acrylic Container stored inside a larger glass container.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Final Disposition Method	Incineration	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Delete

Check boxes to remove one or more Proposed Measures.

Enter New Proposed Measure **Done With Proposed Measures**

15. Once you have completed uploading any relevant attachments you are ready to certify and submit your permit application. You can also view your completed application

Application Articles Points Description **Measures** Attachments **Submit**

Certify & Submit

Changes to the application cannot be made after Certifying and Submitting the application. To view the application, click on the Printable Version button. To edit the application, go to the data area where you want to make changes using the Navigation Bar above.

By Certifying and Submitting this application, you agree to the statements below and the application will be submitted to the PPQ APHIS staff.

I hereby certify that the information in this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

WARNING: Any alteration, forgery, or unauthorized use of this document is subject to civil penalties of up to \$250,000 (7 U.S.C 7734(b)) or punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or imprisonment of not more than 5 years, or both (18 U.S.C 1001)

Certify & Submit

PPQ526-006-047

16. Often you will receive an email asking for various conditions to be fulfilled before the permit is approved, this is a good sign as it means they are considering your application. Conditions can be relatively minor, such as simply a confirmation that you will destroy the ants as opposed to releasing them, or they can be much more stringent, such as requiring pictures of intended storage methods and location, in person inspections, etc.

17. The approval process varies greatly, it can be as short as a few days to as long as a few months, be sure to look out for any emails as failure to reply to any conditions or questions by the permit officer will result in denial of the application. Once approved a permit allows you to possess the species in question for the period of time stated on the permit, it also allows you to have that species shipped to you, the shipper does not require any sort of permit but must simply include a copy of your permit with the shipment.

United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Plant Protection & Quarantine
4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737

Permit to Move Live Plant Pests, Noxious Weeds, and Soil
Interstate Movement
Regulated by 7 CFR 330

This permit was generated electronically via the ePermits system

PERMITTEE NAME:		PERMIT NUMBER:	P526P-19-03399
ORGANIZATION:		APPLICATION NUMBER:	P526-190805-020
ADDRESS:		FACILITY NUMBER:	N/A
MAILING ADDRESS:		HAND CARRY:	Yes
PHONE:		DATE ISSUED:	08/12/2019
FAX:		EXPIRES:	08/12/2022
DESTINATION:			
RELEASE:			

Under the conditions specified, this permit authorizes the following:

<u>Regulated Article</u>	<u>Life Stage(s)</u>	<u>Intended Use</u>	<u>Shipment Origins</u>	<u>Originally Collected</u>	<u>Culture Designation</u>
Camponotus pennsylvanicus	Any	Educational Use	Continental U.S.	Originally Collected from Within the Continental U.S.	

PERMIT GUIDANCE

1) This permit does not authorize movement or release into the environment of genetically engineered organisms produced with the regulated organisms described in this permit. Importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of genetically engineered plant pests require a different permit issued under regulations at 7 CFR part 340. Any unauthorized interstate movement or environmental release, including accidental release, of a regulated GE organism would be a violation of those regulations. Additional guidance and contact information for APHIS Biotechnology Regulatory Services, can be found at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/biotechnology>.
2) If an animal pathogen is identified in your shipment, to ensure appropriate safeguarding, please refer to http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/animals/animal_import/animal_imports_an

Tips for getting approved:

1. Be courteous and use proper grammar in your application.
2. Many questions have options for you to provide additional details or further explain your answer, use these opportunities to help flesh out your application.
3. Carefully consider which species you are applying for, species found within the continental U.S. are more likely to get approved than exotic species.
4. If your desired species has qualities that make it less likely to be a pest species it may be wise to include that in your application.
5. Though the permitting office usually first checks with your state's USDA office, sometimes state denial may come after Federal approval, it is wise to wait a few days after approval to see if your state has any objections.