

**Overview of NAPPO RSPM 08**  
**Authorization of Individuals to Issue Phytosanitary Certificates**

**Purpose:** Phytosanitary certificates (PCs) are issued by representatives of an exporting country national plant protection organization (NPPO). PCs certify that plants, plant products and other regulated articles for export have been inspected and/or tested and meet the plant health requirements of the importing country. This standard describes the responsibilities of NPPOs, and the competencies, training, experience, and education required for individuals who are certified by an NPPO to issue PCs.

**Contents:** The body of the standard describes the general responsibilities of an NPPO, and the specific requirements of an Authorized Certification Officer (ACO) certified to issue a PC. RSPM 08 has one Annex and four Appendices. Their contents are described below.



**Summary of RSPM 08:** NPPOs must ensure the integrity of PCs by confirming that ACOs are well qualified to sign PCs; international obligations are met; necessary infrastructure and resources are provided to ACOs; and a quality manual is developed.

ACOs must be authorized by the NPPO to issue PCs; be objective and have no conflicting personal, political, commercial, or financial interests; take consistent actions in similar circumstances; verify their competence; and receive a passing grade on an NPPO-administered examination.

- **Annex 1** - lists the steps in the process of issuing PCs, and the ACO competencies required for each step.
- **Appendix 1** - lists documents or reference materials that ACOs might consult when deciding whether to issue a PC: for example, import requirement updates; export certification manuals; phytosanitary regulations; treatment manuals; international or regional standards; bilateral work plans.
- **Appendix 2** - lists examples of courses to meet ACO educational requirements.
- **Appendix 3** - includes an example of a training curriculum for ACOs, which includes: an overview of entomology, plant pathology, and weed sciences; international agreements and standards; plant health regulations and legislation; pest risk analysis and risk management; quarantine treatments; pest identification; and specific commodity training.
- **Appendix 4** - contains an auditing checklist for NPPOs.

Please read RSPM 08 for more complete guidance on authorizing individuals to issue PCs.

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