

★ Managing Asian gypsy moth risks

Frequently asked questions



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Contents

Background	2
Frequently asked questions (FAQ)	2
Q1: What are the risks related to the introduction of AGM?	3
Q2: Why does the maritime industry have a role in managing AGM risks?	3
Q3: Which ports are infested by AGM and at what time of the year do the AGM females lay their eggs?	3
Q4: Which countries regulate and inspect arriving vessels for AGM?	3
Q5: What are the criteria for classifying a vessel as high risk of AGM?	3
Q6: What is required from a vessel that is classified as high risk of AGM?	3
Q7: Are the regulating countries performing AGM inspections all year round?	3
Q8: What happens if AGM egg masses are detected during port inspections?	3
Q9: What are the country specific requirements?	3
United States of America (US)	4
Canada	5
Chile	6
Australia	7
New Zealand	8
Q10: How can the crew reduce the vessel's risk of AGM infestation?	9
Q11: Are there other relevant sources of AGM information?	9
Contact details for our offices around the world	10

Background

AGM is an exotic pest with established populations only in countries in the Asia Pacific, such as Russia, China, Korea, and Japan. If introduced in countries where it does not exist naturally, it has the potential to seriously affect the country's agricultural and forest resources. Adult moths frequently lay their egg masses on vessels and shipping containers, and since these egg clusters often survive to hatch at ports of call around the world, exclusion efforts are considered a priority by many local port authorities.



Preventing the introduction and spread of AGM is a shared responsibility that relies on cumulative efforts at origin, en route and at arrival in port. However, it is the responsibility of the ship operator to meet all port requirements related to AGM and managing the risk at its origin to ensure that a vessel is free of AGM upon departure from ports in the infested areas is recognised as the key measure.

Frequently asked questions (FAQ)

General knowledge about the AGM and each country's requirements on how to manage AGM risks will minimise the potential for regulatory action and delays during port entries. The purpose of this FAQ is therefore to provide answers to some of the AGM related questions raised by Gard's Members and clients, to summarises the requirements set forth by each of the regulating countries and provide links to relevant government websites. The FAQ also contains guidelines for how the crew can carry out systematic self-inspections onboard the vessel while en route.

Disclaimer

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Q1: What are the risks related to the introduction of AGM?

The United States has detected and eradicated many AGM infestations in the past and in an AGM factsheet from April 2016, their Department of Agriculture describes the risks as follows: "Large infestations of AGM can completely defoliate trees, leaving them weak and more susceptible to disease or attack by other insects. If defoliation is repeated for 2 or more years, it can lead to the death of large sections of forests, orchards, and landscaping. Any introduction and establishment of AGM in the United States would pose a major threat to the environment and the urban, suburban, and rural landscapes."

Q2: Why does the maritime industry have a role in managing AGM risks?

Attracted to lights, the AGM females often lay their eggs on a vessel's superstructure. Vessels and cargo, such as containers, are therefore known to be involved in the artificial spread of the pest by carrying the egg masses from one port to another. AGM egg masses tolerate extremes in temperature and moisture, and the larvae can, under the right conditions, hatch from an egg mass up to a year after it was attached to a vessel's structure. After hatching, the larvae travel great distances with the wind to find food and may colonise in a new country if left unaddressed. It is therefore vital that the maritime industry and relevant port authorities collaborate on measures to minimise the risk of AGM incursions and implement procedures and policies emphasising vessel inspections.

Q3: Which ports are infested by AGM and at what time of the year do the AGM females lay their eggs?

AGM is found in Asia Pacific and there are high density populations in ports in East Russia, Northeast China, Korea, and Japan. These infested areas are also referred to as the risk areas or the regulated areas.

The AGM flight season, when females lay their eggs, extends from May to September, primarily from July to September in East Russia and northern Japan, from June to September in Korea and China, from mid-May to mid-September in the remaining parts of Japan depending on the specific port location. The AGM flight season is also referred to as the specified risk period or the high-risk period in each of the infested areas.

Q4: Which countries regulate and inspect arriving vessels for AGM?

Countries where this pest is not native and that are currently known to regulate and inspect arriving vessels for AGM are: the United States, Canada, Chile, Australia and New Zealand (the regulating countries) and question Q9 below provides an overview of their relevant requirements. However, authorities in other countries are also likely to be alert to the risk of this invasive and destructive pest.

Q5: What are the criteria for classifying a vessel as high risk of AGM?

In general, and since the AGM larvae can hatch from egg masses up to a year after they were laid/attached to the vessel, a vessel which has called at a port in a risk area during the specified risk period of the current or previous calendar year is considered high risk of AGM. However, there is no uniform international definition of the risk areas or specified risk periods and we refer to Q9 and the country specific requirements for further details.

Q6: What is required from a vessel that is classified as high risk of AGM?

The regulating countries generally require all arriving vessels to declare whether they have traded to ports within the risk areas in the current or previous specified risk period and the need for an inspection will be determined based on an assessment of the vessel's overall AGM risk. Many authorities also require vessels to be certified free of AGM. Please see Q9 for details about each country's entry requirements.

Q7: Are the regulating countries performing AGM inspections all year round?

The potential for larvae to hatch from egg masses attached to a vessel in port, and spread, depends on the local climatic conditions at a specific port. Each of the regulating countries may therefore specify certain periods of the year with heightened surveillance and mandatory inspection for AGM. Please see Q9 for details about each country's inspection periods.

Q8: What happens if AGM egg masses are detected during port inspections?

Actions imposed on the vessel depend on each country's regulation, taking into account climatic conditions at the time of entry as well as the degree of AGM infestation, and the stage of development of the egg masses detected.

In some cases the vessel may be allowed to berth before being cleaned and handled with insecticide spraying whilst alongside. In other cases, if large amounts of egg masses that appear fresh and viable for hatching are detected and the vessel's itinerary indicate that AGM life stages are possible, the risk may be considered too high and the vessel can be ordered to leave the country's territorial waters immediately. In extreme cases, vessels may be refused entry for up to two years during AGM inspection periods in that country (e.g. Canada).

Q9: What are the country specific requirements?

Below is a summary of available information from each of the countries known to regulate and inspect arriving vessels for AGM. Each country's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods as well as their entry requirements and mandatory inspection periods are emphasised.



United States of America (US)

The AGM programme is managed by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS, www.aphis.usda.gov).

US' definition of risk areas and specified risk periods

Risk areas include ports in East Russia, Japan, Korea and Northern China and, in accordance with the [joint AGM bulletin by the US and Canada](#) from February 2016, the US base their AGM policy on the following specified risk periods:

Risk area	Specified risk period
East Russia <i>Nakhodka, Ol'ga, Plastun, Pos'yot, Russkiy Island, Slavyanka, Vanino, Vladivostok, Vostochny, Zarubino, Kozmino</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
People's Republic of China <i>All ports north of 31°15'N latitude</i>	1 Jun - 30 Sep
Republic of Korea <i>All ports</i>	1 Jun - 30 Sep
Northern Japan <i>Aomori, Fukushima, Hokkaido, Iwate, Miyagi, Prefectures</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
Western Japan <i>Akita, Ishikawa, Niigata, Toyama, Yamagata Prefectures</i>	25 Jun - 15 Sep
Eastern Japan <i>Aichi, Chiba, Fukui, Ibaraki, Kanagawa, Mie, Shizuoka, Tokyo Prefectures</i>	20 Jun - 20 Aug
Southern Japan <i>Ehime, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Hyogo, Kagawa, Kagoshima, Kochi, Kumamoto, Kyoto, Miyazaki, Nagasaki, Oita, Okayama, Osaka, Saga, Shimane, Tokushima, Tottori Wakayama, Yamaguchi Prefectures</i>	1 Jun - 10 Aug
Far Southern Japan <i>Okinawa Prefecture</i>	25 May - 30 Jun

US entry requirements

Vessels that, in the past 24 months, has visited one of the risk areas during the specified risk period must:

- obtain a valid pre-departure certificate from a recognised certification body issued at the last port of call in a risk area;
- perform vessel self-inspections en route; and
- forward a copy of the pre-departure certificate together with two years of port of call data to the vessel's local agent at least 96 hours prior to arrival. The agent must ensure that this information is provided to US officials.

Inspection periods in US ports

Mandatory inspection periods in US ports depend on the climatic conditions in each state and are as follows:

Port Location	Inspection period
Alaska	1 Apr - 31 Aug
Great Lakes	1 Mar - 30 Sep
Oregon	1 Mar - 30 Sep
Washington State	1 Mar - 30 Sep
Norfolk, VA and northward	1 Mar - 31 Oct
South of Norfolk, VA to Jacksonville, FL	1 Mar - 30 Nov
South of Jacksonville, FL	1 Jan - 31 Dec
Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas	1 Jan - 31 Dec

Outside the mandatory inspection periods in the US, vessels classified as high risk of AGM are likely to be allowed to berth without interruption, subject to inspections at the discretion of the authorities.

Vessels arriving without the required certificates will be inspected for AGM and are likely to encounter significant delays in cargo operations as well as in routine clearance.

Available information from APHIS

Relevant information includes a separate [Gypsy Moth web page](#), found under the Plant Pests and Diseases Programs. This page provides links to a number of useful publications such as the [Asian Gypsy Moth factsheet](#) as well as to their relevant inspection requirements, outlined in the "Special Procedures for Suspect Asian Gypsy Moth (AGM) ships" ([the Ship Inspection Guidelines](#)). APHIS has also produced a [Gypsy Moth Inspectional Pocket Guide](#) which provides helpful instructions to the crew responsible for performing self-assessments, e.g. what the egg masses look like, where they might be found on vessels, and how the eggs should be removed.



Canada

The AGM programme is managed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA, www.inspection.gc.ca).

Canada's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods

CFIA and APHIS are working together to manage AGM risks at origin and the Canadian requirements are aligned with the requirements enforced in US ports. Hence, Canada's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods are equivalent to those of the US listed above.

Canadian entry requirements

As for entry to US ports, vessels that, in the past 24 months, has visited one of the risk areas during the specified risk period must:

- obtain a valid pre-departure certificate from a recognised certification body issued at the last port of call in a risk area;
- perform vessel self-inspections en route; and
- forward a copy of the pre-departure certificate together with two years of port of call data to the vessel's local agent at least 96 hours prior to arrival. The agent must ensure that this information is provided to Canadian officials.

Vessels arriving without the required certificates may be refused entry into Canada unless an inspection by the CFIA at a designated offshore inspection site is conducted, and the inspector is satisfied that the risk of introducing AGM has been mitigated. If an inspector is not satisfied that the risk of introducing AGM has been mitigated, the vessel will be ordered out of Canadian waters and may be refused entry for up to two years during the AGM risk period for Canada or until the vessel meets the requirements.

Inspection periods in Canadian ports

The climatic conditions in Canadian ports are, however, different to those of US ports and mandatory inspection periods in Canadian ports are as follows:

Outside the mandatory inspection periods in Canada, vessels classified as high risk of AGM are likely to be allowed to berth without interruption, subject to inspections at the discretion of the authorities.

Port Location	Inspection period
Western Canadian ports	1 Mar - 15 Sep
Eastern Canadian ports	15 Mar - 15 Sep

Available information from CFIA

Relevant information includes a separate [AGM web page](#), found under the Plant Protection Program. This page provides links to a number of useful publications such as the [Pest Factsheet](#) as well as to their relevant inspection requirements, which are outlined in [Directive D-95-03](#) "Plant protection policy for marine vessels arriving in Canada from areas regulated for Asian Gypsy Moth". CFIA has also produced an [Inspect Before Entry Guide](#) which provides helpful instructions to the crew responsible for performing self-assessments. The guide can also be printed as a poster that can be displayed onboard the vessel.

Chile

The AGM programme is managed by the Chilean Agriculture and Livestock Service (Servicio Agrícola y Ganadero (SAG), www.sag.cl).

Chile's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods

SAG's regulations concerning entry of vessels from areas with presence of AGM (Exempt Resolution No.: 4412/2013) entered into force in February 2014. Risk areas include ports in Russia, Japan, Korea and China between 60°N and 20°N latitude and Chile base their AGM policy on the following specified risk periods:

Risk area (ports located between 60°N and 20°N latitude)	Specified risk period
East Russia	1 Jul - 30 Sep
South Korea	1 Jun - 30 Sep
North Korea	1 Jun – 30 Sep
China	1 Jun - 30 Sep
Northern Japan <i>Aomori, Fukushima, Hokkaido, Iwate, Miyagi, Prefectures</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
Western Japan <i>Akita, Ishikawa, Niigata, Toyama, Yamagata Prefectures</i>	25 Jun - 15 Sep
Eastern Japan <i>Aichi, Chiba, Fukui, Ibaraki, Kanagawa, Mie, Shizuoka, Tokyo Prefectures</i>	20 Jun - 20 Aug
Southern Japan <i>Ehime, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Hyogo, Kagawa, Kagoshima, Kochi, Kumamoto, Kyoto, Miyazaki, Nagasaki, Oita, Okayama, Osaka, Saga, Shimane, Tokushima, Tottori, Wakayama, Yamaguchi Prefectures</i>	1 Jun - 10 Aug
Far Southern Japan <i>Okinawa Prefecture</i>	25 May - 30 Jun



Chilean entry requirements

Vessels that, in the past 24 months, were in one of the risk areas during the specified risk period must:

- obtain a valid pre-departure certificate from a recognised certification body issued at the last port of call in a risk area; and
- forward a copy of the pre-departure certificate together with two years of port of call data to the Chilean officials at least 24 hours prior to arrival.

Vessels arriving without the required certificates will be subject to inspection – the extent and location of the inspection will be determined based on an assessment of a vessel's overall AGM risk. Such inspection must take place in daylight and free pratique may not be granted until the inspection has been completed.

Inspection periods in Chilean ports

We are not aware that any specific "heightened surveillance window" or mandatory inspection periods are specified for Chilean ports.

Available information from SAG

Exempt Resolution No.:4412/2013: "Establece requisitos fitosanitarios para el ingreso de naves provenientes de áreas con presencia de polilla gitana raza asiática (pgra) *lymantria dispar* asiática *vnukovskij* y *lymantria dispar* japónica (*motschulsky*) (*lepidoptera*, *lymantriidae*)" can be found here:

- in Spanish: [Res. No.4412/2013](#) as revised by [Res. No.8870/2015](#)
- in English (free translations): [Res. No. 4412/2013](#) as revised by [Res. No.8870/2015](#)

Australia

The AGM programme is managed by the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAFF, www.agriculture.gov.au).

Australia's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods

The risk areas include ports in Russia only and Australia base their AGM policy on the following specified risk period:

Risk area	Specified risk period
East Russia All ports between 40°N, 60°N and west of 147°E	1 Jul - 30 Sep

Australian entry requirements

Australia has no formal requirements for vessels to be certified free of AGM. The Australian Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report (QPAR) requires that vessels:

- disclose whether they, in the past 24 months, were in one of the risk areas during the AGM flight season (question 5), and if yes;
- advise if they since the last port call in a high risk area have been inspected and cleared by an agricultural authority in Australia, Russia, Canada, New Zealand or the US (question 5a), and if yes;
- forward a copy of the relevant clearance certificate to Australian officials.

Vessels arriving without any form of valid certificates will be inspected on arrival (only during daylight hours) at relevant Australian ports/anchorages.

Over the last years DAFF has run a targeted approach for the assessment and management of AGM risk on vessels arriving in Australia. Vessels that have visited a risk area during the previous AGM flight seasons will be risk assessed to determine the need for an AGM inspection on arrival. Relevant vessels will be sent an AGM questionnaire as part of the pre-arrival reporting process. Vessels will be notified if a targeted AGM inspection is required as part of their initial port arrival formalities.



Inspection periods in Australian ports

In accordance with DAFF's "Notice to Industry 129-2015" of 21 December 2015, the "heightened surveillance window" for Australian ports is between January and May each year.

Available information from DAFF

Relevant information include an [AGM Factsheet](#), found under their information on high risk cargo pests that shall be considered before importing goods to Australia. Online versions of the [Quarantine Pre-Arrival Report](#) (QPAR) for vessels, both the application form and guide to completing the form are available. Changes to the targeted AGM inspection program are usually announced through their [Import Industry Advice Notices](#).

New Zealand

The AGM programme is managed by the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI, www.mpi.govt.nz).

New Zealand's definition of risk areas and specified risk periods

Until recently only vessels that called at Russian ports during the period 18 July to 16 September were classified as high risk. From the 2016 AGM flight season, the list of defined risk areas has been extended to include ports also in Japan, Korea and Northern China and the MPI base their AGM policy on the following specified risk periods:

Risk area	Specified risk period
East Russia <i>All ports south of 60° north and west of 147° longitude (excluding those ports on the Kamchatka Peninsula)</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
China <i>North of latitude of 32°N</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
Republic of Korea <i>All ports</i>	1 Jun - 30 Sep
Northern Japan <i>Hokkaido, Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima</i>	1 Jul - 30 Sep
Western Japan <i>Akita, Yamagata, Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa</i>	25 Jun - 15 Sep
Eastern Japan <i>Fukui, Ibaraki, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie</i>	20 Jun - 20 Aug
Southern Japan <i>Wakayama, Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kagawa, Tokushima, Ehime, Kochi, Fukuoka, Oita, Saga, Nagasaki, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima</i>	1 Jun - 10 Aug
Far Southern Japan <i>Okinawa</i>	25 May - 30 Jun



New Zealand entry requirements

Vessel that, in the past 12 months, were in one of the risk areas during the specified risk period must:

- obtain a valid pre-departure certificate from a recognised certification body issued at the last port of call in a risk area; and
- provide one year of port of call data with the Advanced Notice of Arrival prior to arrival to New Zealand.

Vessels arriving without the required certificates will be subject to inspection at a specific port as determined by the MPI or potentially four nautical miles offshore at an agreed location if the risk is very high.

Inspection periods in New Zealand ports

We are not aware that any specific "heightened surveillance window" or mandatory inspection periods are specified for New Zealand ports.

Available information from the MPI

Relevant information includes an [AGM web page](#) and the brochure "[Don't bring hitchhikers to New Zealand on your commercial vessel](#)" found under the Hitchhiker Pests web page. The page [Vessel arrival process steps](#) provides an overview of all requirements applicable to vessels arriving in New Zealand.

Q10: How can the crew reduce the vessel's risk of AGM infestation?

The implementation of proper routines for carrying out systematic self-inspections onboard the vessel while en route can be a good way to avoid delays and re-routing during subsequent port calls.

Guides for conducting vessel self-inspections have been published by various authorities and are available to download, examples are Canadian authorities' "[Inspect Before Entry](#)" and US authorities' "[Gypsy Moth Inspectional Pocket Guide](#)." The guides provide helpful instructions to vessel crews on what the egg masses look like, where they might be found onboard the vessels, and how the eggs should be removed and destroyed. In summary, the crew should:

- Carry out a thorough visual inspection of all accessible areas of the vessel's superstructure, decks, holds, cargo and cargo gear. Use binoculars to inspect unreachable areas. Egg masses are often deposited in sheltered locations, in crevices or cavities, under tarps, behind doors, around light fixtures, and underneath the hold rims. As female AGMs are attracted to light, female moths could lay their egg masses on surfaces of the vessel exposed to night lights.
- Scrape off any egg masses found and destroy them in alcohol, boiling water or by incineration. Do not paint over egg masses or drop egg masses into the sea as this will not kill the eggs or larvae.
- Record details of the inspections undertaken and the removal and disposal of AGM egg masses in the vessel's deck log book.



Look for moths while calling at ports in Asia Pacific.

Photo courtesy of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA)



Search for egg masses while en route.

Photo courtesy of the of the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP)



Do not paint over egg masses - scrape off and destroy them

Photo courtesy of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CIFA)

Q11: Are there other relevant sources of AGM information?**North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO)**

NAPPO (www.nappo.org) is a forum for public and private sectors in Canada, U.S. and Mexico to collaborate in the development of science-based standards intended to protect agricultural, forest and other plant resources against regulated plant pests, while facilitating trade. NAPPO has published the standard RSPM 33: [Guidelines for Regulating the Movement of Vessels from Areas Infested with the Asian Gypsy Moth](#) describing various risk management options for vessels which called at ports where the AGM is present.

BIMCO

A new BIMCO clause "Asian Gypsy Moth Clause for Time Charter Parties" focusing on the basic obligations and responsibilities of owners and charterers when dealing with AGM was published in January 2015, see our [Gard Alert of 30 January 2015](#).

The full text of the Asian Gypsy Moth Clause for Time Charter Parties can be found in the Chartering/Clauses section of BIMCO's website at www.bimco.org and Members and clients are recommended to verify that the wording of existing charterparties addresses the allocation of responsibilities in respect of the risk of infestation by AGM.

A collection of AGM information, both general and country specific, is also made available by BIMCO and can be found in the Operations/Trading Restrictions section of their website.

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