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Mexico

Post: Monterrey ATO

Otay Mesa, Baja California Pilot Tests Joint Inspection for Speed and Efficiency

Report Categories:

Trip Report

Fresh Fruit

Vegetables

Agriculture in the News

Approved By:

Ann Murphy, ATO Director

Prepared By:

Ann Murphy

Report Highlights:

On Jan 12 the U.S. and Mexican governments inaugurated a pilot joint inspection at Otay Mesa, Baja California. The governments of the U.S. and Mexico marked the occasion as Mexican-grown Driscoll strawberries were inspected and cleared for onward shipment into the U.S. This pilot program is jointly run with both countries' official inspectors on the job under one roof. This avoids the duplication of inspection at two sides of the border, reducing inspection time for truckers who otherwise would unload, be inspected, and reload produce at two locations. The process ensures both countries' inspection actions are satisfied. Monterrey ATO Director Ann Murphy represented FAS at the event.

General Information:

Mexico's Secretary of the Treasury Luis Videgaray hosted the event and U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske delivered remarks for a delegation of U.S. and Mexican government officials who witnessed the first approved shipment. Speakers highlighted the importance of trade to the two countries as well as this facility's positive effects on local businesses. The event included guests from both countries: commercial interests, customs clearance officials, the staffs of the border inspection agencies, government, and the media. The U.S. and Mexico created the pilot as a pre-clearance point for agricultural products moving from Mexico into the U.S. Dr. Enrique Sanchez Cruz, the Agriculture Secretariat's Director in Chief of Mexico's National Service of Health, Food Safety, and Food Quality was part of the official delegation. This facility at Otay Mesa is a first for U.S. – Mexico collaboration on joint food and agriculture inspections. The U.S. and Mexican governments marked the occasion in a two hour ceremony at the site at Otay Mesa, on the Baja California – California border. The six month pilot program for fruit and vegetable pre-clearance is one of three phases of binational collaboration at three different locations along the 2,000 mile border. Each of the three will facilitate trade aimed at different sectors of products important to the U.S. and to Mexico, including manufactured goods.