

Tips On Trips

Visiting Hawaii Or Puerto Rico? Bring Back Memories, Not Invasive Species

(NAPSA)—Considering a trip to Hawaii or Puerto Rico? These exotic destinations offer adventure and beauty without the headache of passports, immunizations or foreign currency. While Hawaii and Puerto Rico are rich in unique plants, flowers and fruits, they are also home to insects and plant diseases—some invasive and not found in the continental United States. If your travel plans include these islands, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is encouraging you to pack in the adventure and bring back the memories, not invasive pests.

USDA protects America's agriculture and forests from invasive insects and plant diseases that can consume and kill many species of plants, trees and food crops. Invasive plant pests cost our nation about \$40 billion each year in damage and eradication costs, lost trade revenue, and higher food prices at home due to reduced crop yields.

Few people think about invasive pests when enjoying some rest and relaxation. But simply bringing back souvenirs like fresh produce, flowers, plants or crafts made from plants or wood can have devastating impacts on our farms, forests or backyards.

This year, when you make your travel plans, also plan to play it safe. Learn



With a little care, you can have a good time on America's tropical isles without bringing invasive pests back to the mainland.

which items are safe to bring back by visiting USDA's "Traveler Information" page. And always declare any plants, soil, fruits, vegetables, fresh herbs, flowers or souvenirs made from plants or wood, so a USDA official can inspect them and make sure they're pest free.

Thinking about mailing a package of fruit, vegetables or plants to someone stateside? Call your local USDA office in Hawaii or Puerto Rico first to find out what's allowed.

Have fun when traveling to Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Know what's safe to bring back from your trip, so you don't pack a pest. Learn more by visiting www.aphis.usda.gov/plant-health/predeparture.