



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Marketing and  
Regulatory  
Programs

Washington, DC  
20250

March 2, 2026

THE HONORABLE JEFFREY MERKLEY  
United States Senate  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Merkley,

Thank you for your December 31, 2025, letter, cosigned by your colleagues, requesting support from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) in mitigating Japanese beetles in Oregon. APHIS values your commitment to Oregon's greenhouse and nursery producers and understands your concern about this invasive pest.

Currently, APHIS plays a key role in regulating this insect by preventing it from hitchhiking on air cargo that is transiting from affected Eastern States to Oregon and eight other Western States. The Department also works with State departments of agriculture, which mitigate the movement on or in plants/plant material and support agricultural commerce across the country. Our quarantine measures, along with State control actions, are essential to stopping the artificial spread of the Japanese beetle between States and to new regions through aircraft.

APHIS' Plant Protection and Quarantine staff are available to meet with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to review their Japanese beetle funding request. The Department can consider the applicability of *Plant Protection Act* (PPA) Section 7721: Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention (PPDMDP) funding.

APHIS remains focused on efforts to limit the spread of this pest and value the continued collaboration with our State partners on this issue. The ODA can contact William Wesela, National Policy Manager for Japanese beetle, at 301-273-5781 or [william.d.wesela@usda.gov](mailto:william.d.wesela@usda.gov), and Julie Van Meter, National Policy Manager for PPA 7721, PPDMDP, at 970-402-9875 or [julie.vanmeter@usda.gov](mailto:julie.vanmeter@usda.gov).

The Honorable Jeffrey Merkley

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Thank you for working with us to keep U.S. agriculture safe from invasive species. If you have additional questions or concerns, please have a member of your staff contact the USDA's Office of Congressional Relations at (202) 720-7095 or [ocr@usda.gov](mailto:ocr@usda.gov). We sent a similar letter to your colleagues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly L. Moore".

Kelly Moore  
Acting Administrator  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

cc: The Honorable Ron Wyden,  
The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici,  
The Honorable Val Hoyle,  
The Honorable Andrea Salinas,  
The Honorable Maxine Dexter,  
The Honorable Janelle Bynum, and  
The Honorable Cliff Bentz

FINAL:APHIS:LPA:SydneyDoorn:1/29/2026:301-851-3099:CoRe#00068351:CSD  
00068351

Clearances:

EC \_\_\_\_\_

LPA \_\_\_\_\_

PPQ \_\_\_\_\_

OA \_\_\_\_\_

Sources: William Wesela, Matthew Travis, Monica Montero, Tara Holtz, PPQ;  
CM\_Japanese Beetles\_Perkins