



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

To Bee or Not To Bee: CBP and Partners Seized 132 Drums of Honey

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MIAMI – On Aug. 12, Import Specialists from the Miami based Agriculture & Prepared Products Center of Excellence & Expertise (APP Center) in collaboration with U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) Officers and Special Agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Chicago, seized around 42 tons of illegally imported Chinese honey. This represents the third such significant seizure of honey in four months.

The honey was contained in 132 fifty-five gallon drums that were falsely declared as originating from Taiwan to evade anti-dumping duties applicable to Chinese-origin honey. The evaded anti-dumping duties on this shipment of Chinese honey would be nearly \$180,299 based on the rates imposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, had CBP not intervened.

Prior to seizing the smuggled honey, samples were sent to the CBP Laboratory for analysis, where it was determined that the honey had a greater than 99 percent probability match with honey originating from China.

Import Specialists have been working with HSI agents on honey transshipment for years following concerns from industry experts about how anti-dumping circumvention schemes like the one announced today foster a divergent market which severely disadvantages legitimate importers, processors and end-users of honey versus those who place cost above truth-in-labeling. Today’s seizure follows a string of successful criminal prosecutions by HSI Chicago agents of multiple U.S. importers convicted of illegally transacting in smuggled

Chinese honey disguised as Taiwanese – among many other false origins – who were ultimately sentenced and subsequently deported.

“Customs and Border Protection considers Trade Enforcement a priority since it levels the playing field for legitimate companies. The agency certainly does not want questionable companies having a competitive edge because they choose not to correctly describe their products to evade duties,” stated Center Director for Agriculture & Prepared Products Center of Excellence & Expertise Dina M. Amato.

Upon successful forfeiture of the honey to the United States following the government’s ongoing investigation into the full supply chain, the seized honey will be destroyed.

With the recent enactment of the [Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 \(TFTEA\)](#), Congress recognized that industries and companies that circumvent U.S. law and regulation remain a risk to this nation’s economic security. Among its provisions, TFTEA requires CBP and HSI to collaborate to enhance trade enforcement. One of the ways of meeting this requirement comes in the form of an increased and more focused perspective by CBP in the trade arena.

Over the past few years, CBP has stood up ten industry based Centers of Excellence & Expertise as part of CBP’s plan to become more industry and account focused in order to protect the interests of legitimate businesses. These Centers are placed around the country and the Agriculture & Prepared Products Center of Excellence & Expertise is one of these centers and it is headquartered out of CBP’s Miami Field Office in Florida. The APP Center currently employs CBP Import Specialists around the U.S. in dozens of ports of entry whose main focus is ensuring the legitimacy of importations in the agricultural/food industry.

This recent seizure and others occurring around the country in a number of other industries are a great indication that CBP’s efforts are paying off and that the recently enacted TFTEA is already making an impact in the trade enforcement arena.

The public may submit allegations and tips concerning food fraud to the APP Center at: CEE-Enforcement-Agriculture@cbp.dhs.gov

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security charged with the management, control and protection of our nation's borders at and between the official ports of entry. CBP is charged with keeping terrorists and terrorist weapons out of the country while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws.

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