



## Client Alert 10-2023

March 22, 2023

**Flighted Spongy Moth Complex (previously AGM)**

**New Joint USDA-CFIA Bulletin for 2023**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) have issued their latest joint bulletin on the threat posed by the **Flighted Spongy Moth Complex (FSMC)**, formerly known as the **Asian Gypsy Moth** or **AGM**.

The bulletin, a copy of which is appended to this Alert, describes the risks posed by FSMC, as well as the precautions to be taken when visiting ports in areas regulated for FSMC during specified risk periods.

We strongly recommend that vessels visiting these regions during risk periods abide by the USDA/CFIA requirements for pre-departure inspection and certification by a recognized body serving that region, details of which should be available from the local agents.

We also draw your attention to the requirement for two-year port of call data to be provided to US authorities at least 96 hours prior to arrival at a US port, as failure to do so could result in berthing delays.

Lastly, all vessels proceeding to a US or Canadian port from an FSMC regulated area, regardless of the time of year when the call was made, should conduct a detailed inspection during the voyage and ensure there are no signs of FSMC infestation.

We recommend that vessels also consult the latest advice from their P&I Club on the subject, as well as information provided by their local correspondents at ports in FSMC regulated areas.

Please direct questions and/or comments to ECM at [ecm@ecmmaritime.com](mailto:ecm@ecmmaritime.com)

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# Flighted Spongy Moth Complex (FSMC)

(*Lymantria dispar asiatica*, *L. d. japonica*, *L. albescens*, *L. postalba*, and *L. umbrosa*)

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February 2023

The common name “Asian gypsy moth” has been changed as the term “gypsy” has been deemed derogatory. The group of moths making up the AGM complex are now referred to as the flighted spongy moth complex (FSMC). However, updates to websites, policies, forms, certificates, educational material etc., to reflect the new common name, are anticipated to take some time and may vary from country to country. Therefore, reference to AGM and Asian gypsy moth may continue to be seen during this time of transition and certificates using these names will continue to be considered valid if they have been issued by a recognized certification body.

FSMC is a serious pest that can be carried on ships and cargo. FSMC populations are prevalent in some seaport areas in Far East Russia, Japan, Korea, and Northern China. If introduced to North America, FSMC would have significant negative impacts on our forestry and agriculture, the natural environment, the commerce that relies on those plant resources, and market access.

**Vessels must arrive in North American ports free of FSMC and should have obtained pre-departure certification.** It is vital that the maritime industry and authorities in the United States (U.S.) and Canada collaborate on measures to minimize the risk of FSMC incursion. FSMC risk mitigation and exclusion efforts are a joint effort and a high priority.

Both countries are committed to working with industry partners on measures to reduce FSMC risk at origin. The shipping industry’s role in promoting and meeting FSMC requirements has been vital to preventing the introduction of FSMC to North America and maintaining shipping schedules. When vessels arrive without FSMC certification, or when FSMC is detected, significant delays in cargo loading or discharging activities as well as in routine clearance can occur, resulting in loss of revenue to the shipping line and associated parties.

In recent years, very high numbers of moths were observed in many regulated ports. Due to these population outbreaks, a high number of vessels arrived in North American ports with FSMC egg masses. **To prevent a similarly high number of vessels with egg masses arriving in 2023, extra vigilance in conducting self-inspection— in addition to obtaining FSMC certification— is requested.**

**Actions.** For vessels that have called on areas regulated for FSMC during the specified risk periods, as outlined in Table 1, the following measures are required:

- 1. Vessels should be inspected and certificated free of FSMC** by a recognized certification body. A copy of the certificate, stating that the vessel is free of FSMC life stages, should be forwarded to the vessel’s U.S or Canadian agents. A certificate is valid until the ship calls on another port in a regulated area during the specific risk period.
- 2. Vessels must arrive in North American ports free from FSMC.** To avoid facing re-routing, being ordered out of port for cleaning and other potential impacts associated with mitigating the risk of entry of FSMC to North America, shipping lines should perform intensive vessel self-inspections to look for, remove (scrape off) and properly dispose of or destroy all egg masses and other life stages of FSMC prior to entering U.S. and Canadian ports.
- 3. Vessels must provide two-year port of call data, at least 96 hours prior to arrival in a**

**North American port, to the vessel's Canadian or U.S. agent.** The agent is to ensure that this information is provided to U.S. or Canadian officials.

**Table 1. Regulated Areas and Specified Risk Periods**

Country	Port or Prefecture	Specified Risk Period* 2021	Specified Risk Period* 2022-2023
Russian Far East	Nakhodka, Ol'ga, Plastun, Pos'yet, Russkiy Island, Slavyanka, Vanino, Vladivostok, Vostochny, Zarubino, Kozmino	July 1 to September 30	June 15 to October 15
People's Republic of China	All ports in northern China, including all ports on or north of 31°15'	June 1 to September 30	June 1 to September 30
Republic of Korea	All ports	June 1 to September 30	June 1 to September 30
Japan – Northern	Hokkaido, Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, Akita, Yamagata	July 1 to September 30	June 15 to October 15
Japan – Central/Western	Niigata, Toyama, Ishikawa	June 25 to September 15	June 1 to September 30
Japan – Central/Eastern	Fukui, Ibaraki, Chiba, Tokyo, Kanagawa, Shizuoka, Aichi, Mie	June 20 to August 20	June 1 to September 30
Japan – Southern	Wakayama, Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo, Tottori, Shimane, Okayama, Hiroshima, Yamaguchi, Kagawa, Tokushima, Ehime, Kochi, Fukuoka, Oita, Saga, Nagasaki, Miyazaki, Kumamoto, Kagoshima	June 1 to August 10	May 15 to August 31
Japan – Far Southern	Okinawa	May 25 to June 30	May 25 to June 30

\*Specified risk period is the time period when there is a risk of FSMC flight and egg mass deposition

Vessel operators are also reminded to ensure that the vessels are in good repair and decks are clear of debris and unnecessary obstacles in order to allow for thorough inspection both in FSMC regulated areas and upon arrival in North America. While in regulated ports during moth flight periods and where port operations and safety allow, reducing lighting and keeping exterior doors and curtains closed may reduce the number of moths being attracted to the vessel. **Arranging for inspection and certification services as far in advance as possible and providing two-year port of call history at the time of that request allows the inspection and certification body to better plan for delivery of the service in a timely manner.**

Upon arrival in North America there have been FSMC detections on vessels that obtained pre-departure certification. **During the flight period** inspection should be conducted and certification issued as close to departure as possible — ideally during daylight hours and on the same day as departure. Where vessel departure is delayed post certification, there is the possibility that moths may re-infest the vessel and deposit egg masses.

Although we try to align the requirements for FSMC pre-departure certification and vessels arriving free from all FSMC life forms (egg masses, pupae, adults) between the U.S. and Canada, there are differences in port-of-entry processes between the two countries due to sovereign regulations and policies. Please contact local inspection authorities in the port-of-entry if you have any questions regarding FSMC import requirements or clearance procedures.

It is the responsibility of the shipping lines to meet all requirements for entry to the U.S. and Canada, including freedom from FSMC and other pest concerns. We strongly urge maritime interests to take all possible precautions. For further information on the FSMC program, please visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and/or Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's websites.