

APHIS Standards for Snail-Rearing Facilities

(Modified from standards developed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture)

March 2001 (Supercedes all previous versions)

Facility standards:

1. The container (e.g., rearing bed or box) is to be covered by a lid constructed either of screen (mesh size 1/8 inch or smaller) or hardware cloth stretched across a wood or metal frame. The lid is to be securable by a latch or lock that prevents accidental opening.
2. A space of at least 8 inches is to be left between the soil (or other substrate) inside the container and the lid.
3. A 3-inch-wide copper strip is to encircle the inside of the container 3 to 4 inches from the soil surface and be angled down at 45 degrees.
4. All windows, drains, vents, and other openings in the facility (except the entrance door) are to be covered with eighth-inch-mesh screen or hardware cloth.
5. All cracks and crevices (e.g., gaps around water pipes or electrical conduit) are to be sealed.
6. A 3-inch-wide copper strip is to be installed around the lintel, door posts, and door sill.
7. The door is to be closed immediately after entry or exit, and it is to be kept locked when the room is unoccupied.
8. Interior walls, floor, and ceiling are to be painted white to facilitate detection of any escaped snails.

Protocol standards:

1. Only the permittee and persons designated by him are to be allowed entry to the facility.
2. To eliminate hiding places for snails, small items not used daily (trowels, etc.) are to be kept outside the facility.
3. All materials except soil that are removed from the containers (e.g., unconsumed food, dead snails, other debris) are to be immersed in 20% bleach for 5 minutes before disposal.
4. All soil removed from the containers is to be sterilized by steam heat, or dry heat before disposal.

Steam heat: Pressurize soil to 15 lbs., then maintain temperature at 121 degrees Centigrade for 30 minutes.

Dry heat: Hold soil at a temperature of at least 250 degrees F. for 2 hours or at least 310 degrees F. for 30 minutes.

5. If snails are to be processed at the site, live snails are to be transported from the containment facility to the processing facility in a container covered with a screen lid of 1/8 inch or smaller.