



A Visit to US Customs and Border Protection at O'Hare International Airport

AVMA Animal Agriculture Liaison Committee field trip to O'Hare

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Photos courtesy of Dr. Kathy Simmons, NCBA

Rocky the Beagle is harnessed and ready for work at Chicago O'Hare International Airport

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is the unified border agency within the Department of Homeland Security.

Agriculture seizures are on the rise at O'Hare Airport. Meet the Customs K9 who helps sniff out the goods.



- The detector dog program, known as the Beagle Brigade, was established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 1984 and continues to advance today.
- O'Hare's Beagle Brigade has 10 beagles on the squad.
- U.S Customs and Border Protection currently has more than 115 agriculture K9 teams across the nation that do this type of work.
- A trained agriculture dog can scan a piece of luggage for smuggled or forgotten fruits in mere seconds.



Beagle Brigade member works luggage from a Brussels flight

Travelers entering the United States must declare all agricultural products to a CBP officer.

- All biological materials imported into the United States must be documented, labeled, packaged, placarded, and declared in accordance with relevant international, federal, and state regulations. Importers are responsible for knowing and adhering to these regulations, and noncompliance with any regulation may result in importation delays, civil or criminal penalties, and/or seizure of the biological materials.



Illegal food items confiscated from flights arriving from all across the globe.

What do barbecue monkey, ostrich eggs, and whale meat sausage have in common? They've all recently been seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection specialists at O'Hare International Airport, and such seizures are on the rise.

In the last 48 hours alone, customs officers at O'Hare confiscated ruminant meat, prohibited fruit, fried pork skins, leaves, yams, bush meat and other products that could be carrying diseases and insects. Once seized, fresh products such as fruits and vegetables are inspected for pests, then submitted to USDA entomologists for examination.

Illegal meat hidden in luggage. Yum!

What kinds of things have they found?

- An egg from a Giant African Snail.
- Glue made from the skin of a donkey.
- Entire hams and salamis.
- Moose and Whale meat sausages.
- Duck tongues.
- Monkey, antelope and lizard meat are also regularly on the menu.

Confiscated meat is steam-sterilized and disposed.



Beautiful but illegal items made from endangered species. All found in luggage and carry-on bags.





International luggage is x-rayed upon arrival, looking for illegal items