

March 23, 2026

Dear Industry Partners,

Effective today, March 23, 2026, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is implementing a quarantine order on mushroom houses in Chester County to control the spread of Phorid Fly. This step is being taken to ensure that mushroom crops are being protected and mitigate community concerns about elevated Phorid Fly populations outside of agricultural areas.

Pennsylvania has been monitoring the reports of elevated Phorid Fly populations in Chester County connected to mushroom farms. Phorid Fly feeds on decomposing materials in nutrient rich soil and reproduces in dark, damp environments common in mushroom houses. Crop losses connected to Phorid Fly are estimated to exceed millions of dollars each year. While mushroom farmers have worked hard to provide systems for containment, there is still a greater need for monitoring and best management practices to control the proliferation of this pest both within and outside of the mushroom houses.

Pennsylvania leads the nation in organic mushroom sales. Kennett Square alone produces over 60% of the world's mushroom supply and is known as the "Mushroom Capital of the World" due to the high concentration of mushroom houses and growing facilities in the area. In order to protect Pennsylvania's leadership in mushrooms and the region's agricultural economy, we must work together to create a robust mitigation and monitoring strategy for Phorid Fly that lessens crop losses and ensures minimal nuisance to the surrounding community.

To combat the high levels of Phorid Fly and protect our mushroom industry, the PA Department of Agriculture has implemented a Quarantine Order for Chester County that will require:

- Treatment for all mushroom houses using best management practices through "steaming off" before, during, and after the grow cycle.
- Implementation of one additional verified treatment method outlined within the Quarantine Order in addition to the steaming off process.
- Monitor the number of Phorid Flies in each mushroom house.
- Comprehensive record-keeping of steaming off treatments and phorid fly population levels.

Mushroom growers have the responsibility to implement these best management practices, treatments, and record retention in a manner that fits their individual operation. The Department will conduct routine inspections as needed to ensure the safety and efficacy of these treatment measures.

This Quarantine Order will not affect mushroom growers' ability to transport, sell, ship, or distribute their crops in any manner. This specifically applies to grow practices occurring within the mushroom houses to ensure containment and management of Phorid Fly at the farm level.

Best management practices and approved treatments remain the best defense against elevated Phorid Fly populations. Growers who have questions, concerns, or would like more information about Phorid Fly and this quarantine order can contact the Department's Bureau of Plant Industry at (717) 787-4843 or at RA-AGPhorid@pa.gov

We appreciate the mushroom industry's willingness to work proactively with the Department and implement best practices on their farms to protect and support Pennsylvania's world-class mushroom industry.

Questions about this testing program can be directed to the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Plant Industry at (717) 787-4843 or at RA-AGPhorid@pa.gov. A list of Frequently Asked Questions is available on the Department's website.

Sincerely,



Russell C. Redding
Secretary