# US Halts Avocado and Mango Inspections from Michoacán After USDA Agents Assaulted



The US government has temporarily halted the inspection of avocados and mangoes from Michoacán, Mexico, following an incident where two US Department of Agriculture (USDA) agents were assaulted and detained at a roadblock. The agents, responsible for pest control and plant health inspections, were later released.

The interruption impacts the high-value export sector, prompting safety issues and highlighting the influence of criminal violence in the region. Michoacán, supplying over 80% of avocados consumed in the US, is a critical area for these inspections. The state has dealt with significant criminal violence since Mexico's war on drugs began in 2006.

The USDA's decision to pause inspections mirrors a similar shutdown in February 2022 when inspectors were directly threatened by criminal groups. Michoacán Governor Alfredo Ramírez is collaborating with US officials to resume inspections. While mangos and avocados in transit remain unaffected, new produce cannot be inspected or exported at this time.

The incident underscores the challenges posed by organized crime to Mexico’s agricultural exports, which are vital to its economy. Notably, Mexico is a top trading partner of the US and the largest avocado producer globally, with the US being its principal market.

Governor Ramírez and US Ambassador Ken Salazar are working to address the security concerns and resume trade operations swiftly. However, until resolved, the suspension has significant implications for the avocado supply chain between the US and Mexico.