

# Easter morning delivery for space station

April 20 2014, by Marcia Dunn

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This frame grabbed image from NASA-TV Sunday April 20, 2014 shows the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule approaching the International Space Station. It is expected to be captured by the Canadarm2, left, from the International Space Station later this morning. The pair at the time of this frame grab are traveling over the southern Atlantic Ocean. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)

Space station astronauts got a special Easter treat: a cargo ship full of supplies. The shipment arrived Sunday morning via the SpaceX company's Dragon cargo capsule.

"Gentlemen, the Easter Dragon is knocking at the door," NASA's Mission Control said as the capsule was bolted into place.

The Dragon spent two days chasing the International Space Station following its launch Friday from Cape Canaveral, Florida. Astronauts used a [robot arm](#) to capture the capsule 260 miles (418 kilometers) above Egypt.

More than 2 tons of food, spacewalking gear and experiments fill the Dragon, including mating fruit flies, a little veggie hothouse and legs for the resident robot. NASA also packed family care packages for the six spacemen.

On Wednesday, the stakes will be even higher when the two Americans on board conduct a spacewalk to replace a dead computer. NASA wants a reliable backup in place as soon as possible, even though the primary computer is working fine. The backup failed April 11.

The SpaceX delivery wasn't exactly express. The launch was delayed more than a month. A minor communication problem cropped up during Sunday's rendezvous, but the capture still took place on time and with success.



This frame grabbed image from NASA-TV Sunday April 20, 2014 shows the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule captured by the Canadarm2 from the International Space Station at 7:14 a.m. EDT Sunday. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)

SpaceX flight controllers, at company headquarters in Hawthorne, California, exchanged high-five hand slaps, shook hands, applauded and embraced once Japanese astronaut Koichi Wakata snared the Dragon with the station's hefty robot arm.

"Great work catching the Dragon," NASA's Mission Control radioed from Houston. "Thanks for getting her on board."



In this Sunday, April 20, 2014, image made from a frame grabbed from NASA-TV, the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule begins the process of being berthed on to the International Space Station. At the time of this frame grab the capsule was traveling over the South America. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)

The capsule was solid and stable for grabbing, Wakata reported, making the job easy. He congratulated the SpaceX team and added, "We're excited."

A few hours later, the Dragon was secured to the [space station](#). The capsule will remain attached until mid-May. It will be filled with science samples—including the flies—for return to Earth.



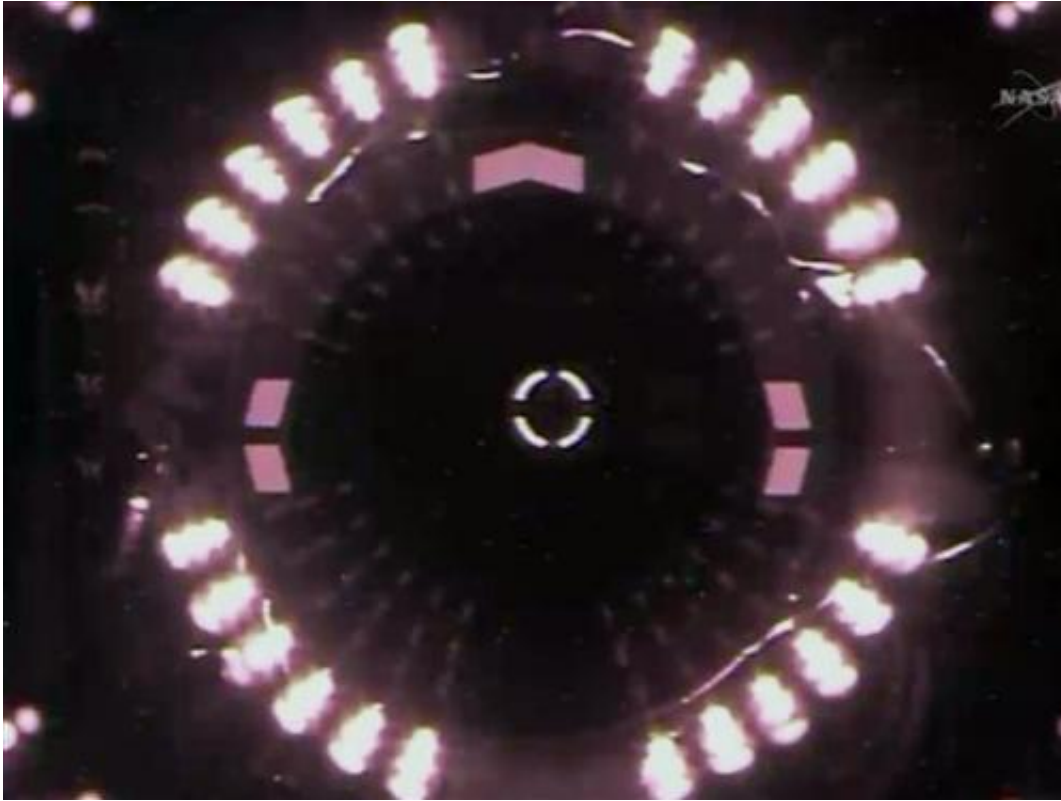
This frame grabbed image from NASA-TV Sunday April 20, 2014 shows the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule just prior to being captured by the Canadarm2 from the International Space Station at 7:14 a.m. EDT Sunday. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)

NASA is paying SpaceX as well as Virginia's Orbital Sciences Corp. to regularly stock the orbiting lab. These commercial shipments stemmed from the 2011 retirement of the space shuttle fleet. This was the fourth station delivery for SpaceX.

Russia, Japan and Europe also make occasional deliveries.



In this Sunday, April 20, 2014, image made from a frame grabbed from NASA-TV, the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule beings the process of being berthed on to the International Space Station. At the time of this frame grab the capsule was traveling over the Pacific Ocean at 9:16 a.m. EDT Sunday. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)



In this Sunday, April 20, 2014, image made from a frame grabbed from NASA-TV, the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule beings the process of being berthed on to the International Space Station. At the time of this frame grab the capsule was traveling over the Pacific Ocean. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)



In this Sunday, April 20, 2014, image made from a frame grabbed from NASA-TV, the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule is berthing on to the International Space Station at 10:06 a.m. EDT Sunday. At the time of this frame grab the capsule was traveling over Brazil. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)





This frame grabbed image from NASA-TV Sunday April 20, 2014 shows the SpaceX Dragon resupply capsule just prior to being captured by the Canadarm2 from the International Space Station at 7:14 a.m. EDT Sunday. (AP Photo/NASA-TV)

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