

Importing, Exporting and Moving plants, including Plant Passporting, in Wales

and importing and exporting to countries in the European Union

Example Guidance to finding information (December 2020)

Changes to plant health regulations will come into force for the UK on 1 January 2021 owing to the UK's withdrawal from the EU. These will directly affect commercial horticulture.

There are a lot of changes. However, if you are already engaged with with importing and exporting these will be largely familiar. If you move plants within the UK, or are just coming to import/export there will be new activities for you but there is a lot of advice available. Your first point of call should be your APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector.

The regulations are to increase biosecurity and protection from plant pests and diseases. Businesses who sell plants and plant products need to be aware, and if relevant to them, act on these regulations. It is essential that, where a business is involved in import or export, business-to-business trade, online trade and distance sales (including home deliveries), they understand the regulations.

Movement of plants within Great Britain

It is important that horticulture businesses in Wales are aware of the plant health regulations. These include registration of your business, certification, inspection, plant passports and phytosanitary certificates, labelling and record keeping.

There are several key terms that you will need to be aware of and glossaries can be accessed through the resources below. Included amongst these terms are:

Plant Passports

Phytosanitary Certificates

Pest Free Areas (in the UK replacing the EU term Protected Zone)

Trade Unit

Authorised Operator, Professional Operator

The regulations for plant passports, and the form they take, is changing after 1 January 2021. The EU flag will not be used on GB plant passports/phytosanitary certificates.

Because of the Government's phased approach to imports it will be important to keep yourself updated on these regulations by using the **Plant Health Information Portal** and gov.uk webpages.

Plant passports (or Phytosanitary Certificates) are needed for all "plants for planting" (including potted plants) that are traded business-to-business (which is likely to include selling to landscapers)

and where businesses move plants more than 10km, including between premises. Plant passports are needed for online sales where this is to a non-business customer. To issue plant passports you must be registered and authorised to do so through APHA. Your local plant health inspector can advise you on this and should be consulted. Records of passports/phytosanitary certificates must be retained by each business. They may be needed for tracing of plants for biosecurity purposes.

Plant passports are not only for businesses but are needed for organisations. This includes charities whose main activity is with plants or who make frequent plant sales.

There are now a lot of online resources to explain the regulations. A Q&A sheet is provided on

[Smarter Rules for Safer Food \(SRSF\) - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/SmartRulesForSaferFood/)

UK Plant Passport templates are available at

[UKPP-templates2.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/UKPP-templates2.pdf)

Information on becoming authorised to issue plant passports is available at

[Issuing plant passports to move regulated plant material in the EU - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/issuing-plant-passports-to-move-regulated-plant-material-in-the-eu)

If you have further questions, there is Plant Health Helpline. In Wales, the Plant Health Helpline is on 0300 1000 313 or email planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

Remember that moving plants to and from Northern Ireland will have different procedures. More details will become available from Defra.

Trading after EU Withdrawal

For Wales there is a guidance on a range of issues such as VAT on

[UK Transition Period Updated Guidance | Business Wales \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/guidance/uk-transition-period-updated-guidance-business-wales)

Information is also available through the Business Wales portal at

[Home | Business Wales - Brexit portal \(gov.wales\)](https://www.gov.wales/guidance/home-business-wales-brexit-portal)

From 1 January 2021 an EORI number will be required to move goods between Great Britain and the EU

<https://www.gov.uk/eori>

You are likely to have specific questions about the plants or seeds you trade. There is a Government email answer service at planthealthexitqueries@defra.gov.uk

Import of plants to Wales and England

The introduction of regulations is taking a phased approach beginning on 1 January 2021 and there will be further changes implemented on 1 April 2021 and 1 July 2021.

In order to prepare, plant importers should

- familiarise themselves with certification requirements
- register on PEACH
- decide whether to register a Place of Destination (POD) as this will give the importer greater flexibility
- register with APHA as a Professional Operator, or the Forestry Commission for trees or wood products

A comprehensive guide to the regulations and the form of plant passports is available at

[Importing and exporting plants and plant products from 1 January 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-and-exporting-plants-and-plant-products-from-1-january-2021)

A fact sheet on post-transition plant passports is available at

[PTP-PP-factsheet-v4-final-.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/files/default-data/documents/2020/PTP-PP-factsheet-v4-final-.pdf)

Comprehensive guidance post-transition, including the use of PEACH registration for importers is available at

[Post Transition Guidance - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/guidance/post-transition-guidance-uk-plant-health-information-portal)

When importing, the priorities are that the phytosanitary certificates are in place, prenotification is given of the import through PEACH, and documentation is prepared and retained.

The regulations for the inspection of imported plants will change during the phased approach. Before 1 July 2021, inspections may take place at registered Places of Destination. An importer will need to register these. Guidance should be sought from the local plant health inspector.

Information on Places of Destination (POD) can be found on

[Place of destination checks on high-priority plants and products from the EU from 1 January 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/place-of-destination-checks-on-high-priority-plants-and-products-from-the-eu-from-1-january-2021)

Import declarations will be needed and tariffs and duty may be payable. Customs agents are often used to deal with administration.

A comprehensive webinar on this topic is available (Imports in Horticulture) on the Tyfu Cymru YouTube channel at

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ_cbxLHSfrFfLokBTntWAA

Export of plants from Wales and England

From 1 January 2021 new EU Plant Passports will no longer be valid and a Phytosanitary Certificate will be needed to move “all plants for planting” from GB to EU. The changes for exporting plants will not be phased.

In order to prepare, plant exporters to the EU should

- familiarise themselves with EU import requirements for their products
- check if laboratory testing of material to be exported will be required through their APHA plant health inspector
- register with APHA as a Professional Operator, or the Forestry Commission for trees or wood products
- check additional requirements for their products e.g. marketing of seeds and varieties, species covered under CITES, organic produce. There are some plants which cannot be exported.

A Q&A guide on marketing, plant varieties and seed is available at

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/uploads/Plant-varieties-and-seed-QA-.pdf>

and regulated plants and plant products at

[External-Plant-and-Forestry-V.2-final.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

Currently exporters should register on the eDomero system. This is an internet facility from Defra that allows paperless transactions and can be used to access services for exporting, plant passporting, potato classification, certification and import licensing. Information is available at

<http://edomero.defra.gov.uk/>

As with imports, export declarations will be needed and tariffs and duty may be payable. Customs agents are often used to deal with administration.

Additional notes

Governmental Organisations

APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency) is an executive agency of Defra. For plants, APHA is responsible for identifying and controlling endemic and exotic diseases and pests and the surveillance of new and emerging pests and diseases. It is also responsible for facilitating international trade in plants.

PHSI (Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate) is part of APHA and implements and enforces plant health policy in Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government. Plant Health and Seed Inspectors, working in regions, have duties including certifying plants for exports and inspecting imported plants and plant material. PHSI can be contacted for information.

The UK is currently operating under the SRSF (Smarter Rules for Safer Food) plant health regulations for plant import and export. The actions that are required from businesses differ between trade with the EU and trade with other countries.

Government web pages

Two primary sources are:

Plant Health Information Portal

The Smarter Rules for Safer Food (SRSF) regulations apply to plants for planting and are applied across all EU members states and are being applied in the UK to maintain high biosecurity.

UK Government

The Plant Health Control webpages are at

[Plant health controls - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plant-health-controls)

These include details for importing and exporting and information on quarantine pests. Click on the links given in these pages as they take you to further, important information. For instance, clicking on the link for importing will take you to a further link to register for PEACH if you are going to start importing plants. The exporting link takes you to details of applying for the certification you may need.

Certain plant material e.g. trees, seed potatoes requires notification for its import. Information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-trees-and-plants-to-england-and-wales-from-the-eu>

Videos and training modules

A voluntary plant health standard is being rolled out and this is described in the webpages of Plant Healthy <https://planthealthy.org.uk/> A series of training modules (Introduction to Plant Health and Good Biosecurity Practice) have been produced to support this standard and these are useful in understanding the plant health standard.