

This note presents an overview and is for guidance only. The note strives to make the information accurate but no claims or guarantees are made about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents. The user should not use it to take decisions and independent advice must be taken.

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 (November 2022)

Changes to plant health regulations are being made following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. These will directly affect commercial horticulture.

There are a lot of changes and these changes continue to be made as border controls are introduced. However, if you are already engaged with importing and exporting these will be largely familiar. If you move plants within Great Britain 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, changed after 1 January 2021. The EU flag is not now used on GB plant passports/phytosanitary certificates. The UK plant passport will show that the plant health standards of GB have been met.

Because of the Government's phased approach to introducing import controls 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 usually includes selling to landscapers) and where businesses move plants more than 10 miles, 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

[https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/trade/plant-passports/plant-passport-faq/#:~:text=A%20UK%20Plant%20Passport%20\(P%20P\)%20is%20an%20official%20label%20for,Pest%20Free%20Areas%20\(PFAs\).](https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/trade/plant-passports/plant-passport-faq/#:~:text=A%20UK%20Plant%20Passport%20(P%20P)%20is%20an%20official%20label%20for,Pest%20Free%20Areas%20(PFAs).)

Information on registration and access to an eLearning module on plant passporting is available at:

[Smarter Rules for Safer Food \(SRSF\) - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

UK Plant Passport templates are available at

[UKPP-templates2.pdf \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

Information on becoming authorised to issue plant passports is available at

[Issuing plant passports to move regulated plant material in the EU - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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. Help on plant passports can also be provided if you email PlantPassportRegistration@apha.gov.uk

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

Trading since EU Withdrawal

Information is also available on Border Controls in relation to Wales at

[Post EU-exit border controls and infrastructure | GOV.WALES](#)

From 1 January 2021 an EORI number was required to move goods between Great Britain and the EU and Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands

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

Import of plants to Wales and England

The introduction of regulations and border controls is taking a phased approach and began on 1 January 2021.

Plant importers should

- familiarise themselves with certification requirements

- register on PEACH or IPAFFS
- 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 registration and prenotification of goods is available at

[Import plants and plant products from the EU to Great Britain and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-the-eu-to-great-britain-and-northern-ireland)

A summary of the information resources, with links, from gov.uk is available at

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

Links through the UK Plant health Information Portal for imports and exports are available at

[Trade - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.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 or IPAFFS, and documentation is prepared and retained. There is currently a transition for users from the PEACH system to IPAFFS (Import of Products Animals Food and Feed System).

The regulations for the inspection of imported plants will change during the phased approach. 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 is available in the link above.

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 Knowledge Hub

Export of plants from Wales and England

From 1 January 2021 new EU Plant Passports were no longer valid and a Phytosanitary Certificate will be needed to move “all plants for planting” from GB to EU. The changes for exporting plants were not phased, unlike imports. The controls and systems for export in the EU are determined by the EU.

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.

Information on exporting, applying for phytosanitary certificates and registering for exporting is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-plants-and-plant-products-from-great-britain-and-northern-ireland>

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 \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

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

Movement of plants and plant products between Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The regulations on the movement of plants and plant products between GB and NI are different from moving them within GB.

The Trader Support Service is available to guide you through the movement of goods under the Northern Ireland Protocol <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trader-support-service>

Northern Ireland to Great Britain

Goods can be moved from NI to GB in the same way as prior to 1 January 2021 if they are qualifying Northern Ireland goods. Guidance on this can be found at:

[Moving qualifying goods from Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Great Britain to Northern Ireland

For plants being exported to Northern Ireland that need to be inspected and certified, you may not need to pay, with the costs being invoiced by the certifier to the Government under the Movement Assistance Scheme. Further details on this Scheme are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/movement-assistance-scheme-get-help-with-moving-agrifood-goods-to-northern-ireland/traders-how-to-get-advice-and-which-costs-are-covered>

[Movement Assistance Scheme: get help with moving agrifood goods to Northern Ireland - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

If you export fruit, vegetables or cut flowers from GB to the EU or NI, you may be eligible for the plant health exports audited trader scheme (PHEATS) by which you can do your own inspections and apply for PCs to be issued. Details on registration can be found at:

[PHEATS - Homepage - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](#)

Growing Media

Growing media attached to, or associated with, plants for export from Wales will need to meet the EU's third country import requirements. Guidance is now available:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/trade/exports/exports-to-the-eu/special-export-requirements/growing-media-and-special-requirement-guidance-for-exports-to-the-eu/>

Organic produce

It is reported that the EU has recognised the UK control bodies for the purpose of exporting organic products to the EU, and the use of logos, until 31 December 2021.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-and-exporting-organic-food>

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.

Government web pages

A primary source is:

Plant Health Information Portal

This is an online hub for plant health information (including imports and exports), data and resources on pests.

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/>

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.