



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

26th March 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

Stakeholder engagement for the policy review of tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV)

I am writing to seek your views on a policy review of ToBRFV. No changes are being proposed as a result of this review.

Background

ToBRFV is a damaging pest of tomatoes, which has been recorded to infect up to 100% of the crop and cause yield losses of between 25 and 70%. Since the virus was first observed in Israel in 2014, it has spread to other parts of Asia and to Africa, Australia, Europe, North America and South America.

ToBRFV is currently listed as a quarantine pest (QP) in Great Britain and there are specific import requirements for seeds and plants for planting (excluding seed) of *Solanum lycopersicum* (tomato) and *Capsicum* (pepper) spp. to prevent the introduction of the virus into the country.

There have been 12 outbreaks of ToBRFV in Great Britain since 2019, nine of which have been declared eradicated, with eradication measures being applied at the three remaining outbreak sites.

The EU Commission has recently adopted new legislation to reclassify ToBRFV from being a QP to a regulated non-quarantine pest (RNQP), as the virus is now widely distributed in the Union territory and has increased its area of distribution worldwide. To consider this change of approach, a policy review has been carried out to assess the quarantine status and current regulations of ToBRFV in Great Britain.



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Policy review

The attached document considers the changes made to the EU regulations for ToBRFV and the responses to the EU consultation on the reclassification of the virus. As a consequence, the following areas have been reviewed for Great Britain:

1. The quarantine status of ToBRFV
2. The de-regulation of *Capsicum* spp.
3. The exemption of “resistant” *Solanum lycopersicum* cultivars
4. Seed testing requirements
5. The inclusion of a pest free area measure for ToBRFV

In conclusion, no changes are being proposed to the quarantine status of ToBRFV or any other regulations. However, the situation will continue to be monitored and a further review held if:

- ToBRFV becomes widespread in Great Britain and eradication is no longer feasible;
- Tolerant and resistant varieties become widely adopted and reduce impacts to an acceptable level; or
- Seed interceptions are reduced to a marginal level

We welcome your views on whether you agree to maintain the current quarantine status and regulations for ToBRFV. In addition, if you have evidence that should have been considered within this review, we would be grateful if you could submit this to us.

Any comments should be sent to plantpestrisks@defra.gov.uk by **18th June 2025**.

Comments provided in response to this letter, including personal information, may be made available to the public on request, in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

If you do not wish your response, including your name, contact details and any other personal information, to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your comments. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for the information under freedom of information legislation. However, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

Yours faithfully,

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