



## Plant Passporting Update No. 53

March 2025

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## List of Authorised Distance Plant Sellers (LADPS)

A distance plant sale occurs when plants are sold either by mail order or by internet shop (known as 'distance sales') and delivered by a third party. Un-authorised distance sales have been found to include illegal goods containing pests and diseases.

In 2024, APHA carried out a review of the top 100 online plant sellers by Google search and found that more than 20% were not authorised to issue UK plant passports.

To track and trace non-compliant businesses selling by distance sales would require APHA people resource. Thus, to support compliant businesses, APHA has created a voluntary list of businesses who are authorised to issue plant passports for plants sold by distance contract. This will make it easier for UK

plant buyers to tell if a plant seller is authorised and will enable businesses to demonstrate that they are reputable plant sellers and meet bio-secure standards under plant passporting.

If you are an authorised nursery or plant trader that is competing with unauthorised sales on the internet, please sign up to the list to help pressure unauthorised sellers. [Details of how to do this, as well as the current list of authorised plant sellers are available on GOV.UK.](#)

It is early days, but 350 businesses have signed up to the list to date: [List of authorised distance plant sellers.](#)

## Moving large oak trees – submit movement records by end of April

A reminder that if you are a Professional Operator moving large oak trees (girth at 1.2m above the root collar of 8cm or more) in the Southeast Oak Processionary Moth management zone, there are policy requirements in place for you to report large oak movements. You must keep accurate records of the details of those receiving large oak trees, including the delivery address and contact details, and store this information for a minimum of three years to ensure traceability of movements. The information can be recorded using the [Post planting Inspections form](#) which can also be found alongside more information on the biosecurity requirements on the [Restrictions on trade and movement of oak trees](#) section of the OPM GOV UK webpage.

If you are in the OPM management zone (Established area or Buffer zone) and have been moving large oak trees, you should send your large oak movement records from May 2024 onwards to APHA Plant Health Service at [treehealthtracing@apha.gov.uk](mailto:treehealthtracing@apha.gov.uk) by the end of April. Speak to your Plant Health Inspector if you need more information on what to send in.

### Where is the OPM management zone?

The Great Britain OPM [management zones map 2024 with exclusion zone](#) was updated for the start of the OPM 2024 season, and the management zone boundaries will remain the same for the OPM 2025 season. To see what zone the large oak trees you want to move are in, and what zone they would be moved to, you can use the [Forestry Commission interactive map](#) or download the full [list of postcodes in the OPM management zones](#) (buffer zone, established area and 10km exclusion zone). You can also see a [list of local authorities and wards](#) that fall into the buffer zone and established area.

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## Publication of guidance - Northern Ireland plant health label (NIPHL) scheme

On 20 February 2025 Defra updated guidance for businesses moving plants and seeds for planting, and seed potatoes from Great Britain to Northern Ireland using the Northern Ireland plant health label (NIPHL) scheme.

The functional requirements and scope of the scheme have not changed. We have listened to trader feedback, making the guidance clearer and more user-friendly. Defra have created new commodity specific pages, splitting the guidance into pages covering: Plants and seeds for planting and Seed potatoes.

The guidance has been structured following a step-by-step approach making it clearer for growers and traders to understand exactly what steps need to be taken to move goods from GB to NI using the NIPHL scheme. Should you have any questions please email [planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk](mailto:planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk).

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## Ensuring consignments of NIPHL scheme goods report for inspection in NI and are pre-notified

If you are moving plants for planting, seeds or seed potatoes to Northern Ireland using the Northern Ireland plant health label (NIPHL) scheme, you must ensure that all consignments are presented for inspection on first arrival in Northern Ireland at the designated DAERA SPS Inspection facility, as legally required in accordance with the Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625. All checks must be completed before consignments can leave the port.

You must also ensure that the business (or their agent) receiving the goods in NI pre-notify DAERA by submitting a CHED-PP 24 hours before the goods arrive in NI. DAERA will use this information to facilitate timely checking of goods upon arrival. If any of this information changes post completion of the CHED-PP, the consignee must update the CHED-PP with the new details. For further information read the guidance on GOV.UK on [moving plants and seeds from Great Britain to Northern Ireland using NI plant health labels](#).

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## Responsibilities of businesses authorised to issue UK plant passports

A reminder to all businesses issuing UK plant passports you must ensure that:

- Plants and plant products are traceable throughout the supply chain and declare compliance with plant health requirements such as freedom from pests and diseases - this is essential for maintaining biosecurity.
- Ensure you apply about a month in advance for your re-authorisation, which is legally required on an annual basis.
- Have a person responsible on site, who knows about the requirements of the statutory plant passporting scheme and has a knowledge of plant pest and diseases.



Recent interceptions this spring have included [Bemisia tabaci](#) and [Phytophthora ramorum](#).

Find out more in our [Plant Passport FAQ](#).

## Spring 2025 legislation – recategorized goods

As described on the Defra plant health portal last [December](#), the GB Plant Health Services plan to introduce legislative changes to enhance our biosecurity in spring 2025.

Certain goods would be re-categorised by risk as a result of these changes. Please see [here](#) for the full details.

## UK interceptions of quarantine pests

You can find details of recent interceptions we've made on plants and plant material to date in [2025 Non-compliance data - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](#).

The data gives a good overview of current pests and diseases that could pose a threat to businesses, growers and traders.

[See our latest interceptions](#)

## Seasonal pests and diseases

Help us prevent these pests and disease from entering and being spread in the UK. We have included information on various pest threats below, which you need to be aware of:

### Ornamental plants

[\*Bemisia tabaci\*](#) (Tobacco whitefly) is one of the most economically important agricultural and horticultural pests in the world, due in part to its adaptability, extreme host plant range and capacity to vector more than 110 plant pathogenic viruses.

*B. tabaci* adults are about 1 mm long, the male is slightly smaller than the female. The body and both pairs of wings are covered with a white, powdery, waxy secretion. The wings are held tent-like above the body and slightly apart, so that the yellow body is apparent. The eggs are oval, pale brown in colour, with a pedicel stalk at the base, approximately 0.2 mm long. They are laid randomly, either singly or in scattered small groups, on the under-surface of leaves, although they may be laid in partial circles on smooth leaves.

*B. tabaci* is notifiable, so please [report a quarantine plant pest or disease](#).

In the UK, *B. tabaci* needs to be distinguished from those of the ubiquitous glasshouse whitefly (*Trialeurodes vaporariorum*), which is not a quarantine species.

### Forest and ornamental trees

[Pine pitch canker](#) (*Fusarium circinatum*), reported in nurseries and forests in France and Italy, it is not currently known to be present in the UK. See [Forest Research pest alert on Pine pitch canker](#).

Also known as pitch or pitch pine canker, this is a serious canker disease of pines and Douglas fir caused by the fungus *Fusarium circinatum*. The disease affects trees in planted forests, nurseries, parks and gardens. In plantations, the disease leads to reduced growth and cone yield and can kill trees. It will also kill tree seedlings in nurseries.

If you suspect the presence of Pine pitch canker, report it to your local plant health and seeds inspector or via [report a pest or disease](#).



*Fusarium circinatum* (GIBBCI) - <https://gd.eppo.int>

Picture above: Pine Pitch Canker, courtesy of EPPO.

This summer look out for [Dothistroma needle blight](#) (DNB) also known as Red Band Needle blight, as it is an economically important disease of conifer trees (trees with cones and needles), and particularly pines (trees in the *Pinus* genus). It is caused by the fungus *Dothistroma septosporum* (*D. septosporum*).

It causes premature needle defoliation, resulting in loss of timber yield and, in severe cases, tree death.

It is also known as red band needle blight because of the colourful symptoms it shows on pine trees. For more detail see [Disease symptoms and life cycle of Dothistroma \(red band\) needle blight - Forest Research](#).

DNB mostly occurs in managed pine forests. UK foresters are trained to recognise and manage it, so we do not require reports of suspected cases in forests from members of the public.

However, findings of DNB in trade, such as in nurseries or garden centres, must be reported to the relevant plant health authority. If you are based in England and Wales, report sightings to your local Plant Health and Seeds Inspector.

## Edible crops

### Pest and disease of seed and ware potato crops

Colorado potato beetles are a significant threat to potato crops. The adult beetles and larvae feed on the foliage of potato and other plants in the nightshade family and can completely strip them of their leaves if they are left uncontrolled. However, they are not a threat to human or animal health.

In June 2023 there was a finding of Colorado beetle in Kent, the first confirmed finding in the UK since 1977, although they are endemic in large parts of Europe.

If you suspect the presence of Colorado potato beetle, please immediately report it to your local plant health and seeds inspector or [via the plant health information portal](#).

Keep up to date with the latest information: [UK Plant Health Information Portal - UK Plant Health Information Portal \(defra.gov.uk\)](#).



Picture above: Adult Colorado potato beetle (image copyright Fera Science Limited).

- Potato [Brown rot](#), which is caused by the bacterium *Ralstonia solanacearum* and is a regulated quarantine disease of potato in the UK. Yield losses are mostly caused by tuber rotting and, in many warmer

areas of the world, it is one of the main limiting factors in potato production. It has a wide host range, affecting other crops, ornamental plants and some weed species. Brown rot is present in limited places in England and is notifiable. Please [report any findings](#).

- [Potato wart disease](#), caused by the soil-borne fungus *Synchytrium endobioticum*, affects cultivated potato and a number of wild Solanum species. It was once the most serious disease of potato but has now been controlled by statutory measures and the development of 'immune' varieties. However, it still poses a **significant threat** to potato production because the spores of the fungus can remain **viable in contaminated soil for many years**. Also, new strains of the fungus, capable of attacking potato varieties that were previously resistant, have developed in several European countries. Potato wart disease is present in limited places and is notifiable, please [report any findings](#).
- As ware and seed potato crops emerge and grow away this summer, while crop walking, please take time to check for [Colorado beetle](#) (*Leptinotarsa decemlineata*) and [Potato flea beetle \(Epitrix\)](#) which are serious pests of potato. It is important crops are checked by Plant Health and Seeds Inspectors and growers, as maintaining our pest free status supports the UK's wider international position and ability to move and export potatoes. This is why they are regulated quarantine pests, whose introduction and release is prohibited under plant health legislation.

Both pests are not present in the UK and are notifiable. [Report a pest or disease](#).



Epitrix tuberis (EPIXTU) - <https://gd.eppo.int>

Picture above: Damage of Epitrix spp. on potato tuber from EPPO web site, courtesy: Jean-François Germain, Plant Health Laboratory, Montpellier (FR).



# Information on the Defra plant health portal

The [UK Plant Health Information Portal](#) offers a wide range of information to everyone to use as a resource. Defra have refreshed and produced a range of new and update pest and disease information.

## Pest factsheets – notifiable pests

[Paysandisia archon Final.pdf](#) – Palm borer factsheet update.

[Corythucha-ciliata factsheet update.pdf](#) – An update on the factsheet following confirmed findings in the UK.

## Pest factsheets – notifiable diseases

[Plum-pox-factsheet final-v2.pdf](#) – Plum Pox Virus factsheet update.

## Pest factsheets – non-notifiable pests

[Diaphania-factsheet-update Final.pdf](#) – *Diaphania* species (*indica*, *hyalinata* and *nitidalis*) – Curcubit moths factsheet update. **Note this was previously under notifiable pests and on update has been moved.**

## Pest alert – notifiable pests

[Pest alert Pochazia final.pdf](#) – *Pochazia shantungensis* new pest alert.

[Corythucha ciliata Pest alert update.pdf](#) – An update on the pest alert following confirmed findings in the UK.

## Bio-security advice

[Yacon Preventing the introduction and spread of yacon viruses 25.pdf](#) – An update on the biosecurity guidance for Yacon. This replaces two previous factsheets.

[Biosecurity Advice Ulluco 2025-v2.pdf](#) – An update on the biosecurity guidance for Ulluco (an Andean root tuber).

[Contingency plans](#) for a range of pests and diseases. Contingency plans strengthen protection against plant pests and diseases inland and includes a commitment to develop effective contingency plans and clear governance to

help eradicate or minimise the impact when outbreaks occur. And the [UK Plant Health Risk Register](#) which you can download and manipulate the data to help you make risk-based decisions on plants you buy and trade onto others.

## Get in touch

Always check your plants for symptoms. If you suspect disease, or have any queries, please speak to your local plant inspector or contact PHSI HQ ([planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk](mailto:planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk) or 0300 100 0313).

You can also get social with us:



Please contact the [externalcommunications@apha.gov.uk](mailto:externalcommunications@apha.gov.uk) mailbox if you no longer wish to receive these email notifications

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.