



Plant Passporting and NIPHL Update No. 57

March 2026

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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 if you are in the Established Zone. 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 buffer zone and have been moving large oak trees, you should send your large oak movement records from May 2025 onwards to the APHA Plant Health Service at treehealthtracing@apha.gov.uk by

the end of April 2026. Speak to your Plant Health Inspector if you need more information on what to send in.

Where is the OPM management zone?

The current Great Britain OPM management zones and 10km exclusion zone can be viewed on this [map](#). 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.

Tree disease (*Phytophthora pluvialis*) restrictions lifted in seven English counties

Trade restrictions on conifer trees were lifted across seven English counties on Wednesday 4 March after Defra-funded research concluded the tree disease *Phytophthora pluvialis* no longer meets the criteria for quarantine pest status.

Demarcated areas in Cornwall, Cumbria, Devon, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Surrey have been revoked, enabling the unrestricted movement of affected conifer species for the forestry and plant trade sector.

Please see the press release for more information. [Tree disease restrictions lifted across seven counties - GOV.UK.](#)

Reminder: For NIPHL movement of plants for planting and seed potatoes from Great Britain to Northern Ireland

With the new year underway, here's a reminder on what you need to know about moving plants for planting and seed potatoes from Great Britain to Northern Ireland under the NIPHL scheme:

Lawn turf

Lawn turf produced under normal field based growing conditions does not meet EU phytosanitary requirements (Annex VII 1 of regulation 2019/2072). Therefore, it cannot be moved from Great Britain to Northern Ireland using either a Phytosanitary Certificate or a NIPHL (free from soil and organic matter). For the same reasons, it is also not permitted entry into the Republic of Ireland or any other European Member State. Any movements of lawn turf not meeting the conditions stipulated in Annex VII of regulation 2019/2072 will be not accepted. Failure to comply will result in consignments being denied entry into Northern Ireland and returned to Great Britain or otherwise removed from circulation. Please click the following link for further information.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2019/2072/annex/VII>

Movement of woody plants and species

GB-NI movement of woody plants and species must be pre-notified to DAERA 3 days in advance of arrival in line with national legislative requirements by creating and submitting a 'Common Health Entry Declaration' (CHED) via the online platform called 'TRACES NT'. Please see the following link for further information on woody plants including prohibited species and import restrictions on high-risk plants.

[Advance notification requirement for importation of trees from the EU and GB | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

GB-NI movement of seed potatoes under the NIPHL Scheme

Businesses can only move seed potatoes from Great Britain to Northern Ireland using the NIPHL scheme.

The main requirements of the NIPHL scheme are as follows:

- Get authorised to use the NIPHL scheme.
- Only move pre-basic or basic grade seed potatoes under the NIPHL scheme (other grades of seed potato cannot be moved due to Northern Ireland having a longstanding status as a protected region to produce high-quality seed potatoes, which restricts marketing to grades in the pre-basic and basic categories).
- Make sure that the seed potatoes moved under the NIPHL scheme are for Northern Ireland - they cannot be moved on to Ireland or other EU Member States, although the resulting crop of seed potatoes or ware, can be moved and marketed in the EU.

- Only move seed potatoes under the scheme to a business in Northern Ireland that is registered as a professional operator and signed the NIPHL scheme declaration.
- Consignments must have a NIPHL label attached (i.e. to the smallest applicable trade unit).
- Each consignment of seed potatoes moved from GB to NI must be pre-notified with a CHEDPP including the name of the NIPHL authorised GB consignor. The named NI consignee on the CHEDPP must be the NI professional operator who is the commercial grower at the place of destination.
- All GB seed potato imports must be presented for inspection at the DAERA SPS Inspection Facility at the point of entry port.

Further information can be found on the following webpage: [Move seed potatoes from Great Britain to Northern Ireland using NI plant health labels - GOV.UK](#)

Sending small parcels of plants for planting to individuals in Northern Ireland.

Small consignments of plants for planting (including seeds) can only be moved under the NIPHL scheme if sent from a GB authorised NIPHL professional operator to a NI professional operator and the consignment must comply with official controls requirements including a CHEDPP and must be presented to the DAERA SPS facilities for inspection.

You must clearly label parcels as containing sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) goods. For example, with a green label that includes the wording 'SPS'. Please see the following links for further information.

- [Export or move plants and plant products from Great Britain and Northern Ireland - GOV.UK](#)
- [Sending parcels between Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Windsor Framework - GOV.UK](#)

Applications to renew NIPHL authorisation in GB

Thank you to all clients who submitted applications to renew their NIPHL authorisation in GB during September 2025, no renewals are required for NI professional operators. Applications approved since 1st September 2025 are now valid through to 31st September 2026.

For the 2026-2027 business year, all authorised businesses must apply for authorisation renewal during the month of **September 2026**.

Applications should be submitted annually using the online form found here: [Apply to renew a Northern Ireland plant health label \(NIPHL\) scheme authorisation - GOV.UK](#)

You will be asked to provide:

- your NIPHL scheme authorisation number (if you know it).
- the trading name of your business.
- the contact details of your business.
- the name of the person responsible for your businesses' NIPHL scheme authorisation.

If you have any questions regarding the NIPHL scheme renewals process, please contact your local plant health and seeds inspector.

DAERA Inspection

Consignments must be presented for inspection at the designated DAERA SPS Inspection facility upon arrival in Northern Ireland, as legally required in accordance with the Official Controls [Regulation - 2023/1231 - EN - EUR-Lex](#). Loads must be presented on first arrival in Northern Ireland, and we ask that drivers cooperate with ground staff as they undertake legally required inspections.

Moving plants or seeds for planting that have changed form after initially being planted in Northern Ireland

Plants for planting that only increase in size or are re-potted in Northern Ireland without undergoing any physical change in form remain the same plants as were originally moved to NI using a NIPHL. Therefore, in accordance with NIPHL rules these cannot then be moved to the Republic of Ireland or other EU countries.

Where plants or seeds have been planted in Northern Ireland and have changed form (that is germinated or grown into a new plant or a new seed/bulb) these are considered to have undergone a change of country of origin and can therefore, under NIPHL legislation can subsequently be moved to the Republic of Ireland or other EU countries, provided EU movement requirements are complied with. See table below:

<u>Original form</u>	<u>Does the original plant for planting change from their physical form into a new plant?</u>
Seeds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if grown into plants (i.e., no longer in seed form ¹)

Bulbs, corms, rhizomes or tuber (other than seed potato tubers)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if grown into plants (i.e., no longer in dormant bulb, corm, rhizome or tuber form) ¹
Sprouts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if grown into plants (i.e. no longer in sprout form) ¹
Plant tissue cultures	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if grown into plants (i.e., no longer plant tissue cultures) ¹
Rootstocks, material for bud work, or scions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if the introduced scion is grafted onto a rootstock, or the imported rootstock is grafted onto a scion, and then grown as a whole plant ¹
Cuttings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, if grown into plants (i.e., no longer a cutting) ¹
Propagation material – (products from plants)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes, for any resulting products from the plant, such as seed/bulbs/scions/budwood etc
Small plant / plant for planting	<input type="radio"/> No, if simply grown into a larger plant or potted into a new container/pot

[¹] Cuttings could be taken from the resulting plants (including unrooted cuttings or rooted cuttings) which could also be moved to EU

Means the plant changes form to the extent that it is no longer regarded as the same plant for planting.

Instances where the plant for planting has not changed form sufficiently to be regarded as a different plant.

UK interceptions of quarantine pests

You can find details of recent interceptions we've made on plants and plant material to date by country, botanical name, commodity and pest, click on the Harmful Organisms button in the [UKPhins Reports](#) for more information.

The data gives an overview of current pests and diseases that could pose a threat to businesses, growers and traders. You will see in the year to date report by harmful organisms [Bemisia tabaci](#) (Tobacco whitefly) on a range of plants and crops; and [Xanthomonas arboricola pv pruni](#) (bacterial spot and canker) on a wide range of prunus species.

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:

Ornamentals

[Bacterial spot and canker](#) of Prunus is caused by *Xanthomonas arboricola* pv. *pruni*, is a notifiable disease of Prunus. Although potentially damaging on all Prunus species, the most severely affected stone fruit hosts are peach, apricot and plum. The bacterium causes leaf spots and shot-holing of leaves, spotting of fruit and stem cankers. The disease is present in the EU, but not in GB and is notifiable. [Report a pest or disease](#) if you suspect its presence.

Edible plants

The bacterium *Ralstonia solanacearum* and is a regulated quarantine disease of potato in the UK, however, can infect other crop hosts that are grown in the UK and could be infected in favourable conditions include: cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*), pumpkin and squash (*Cucurbita pepo* and *C. maxima*), common, or French, bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris*), tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*), and blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*). Numerous ornamental hosts are also susceptible.

In potato crops, 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. If allowed to become established in potato crops in the UK, the effect on our seed-potato industry could be substantial, especially for exports. It has a wide host range, affecting other crops (symptoms can be restricted growth and

wilting) ornamental plants and some weed species. Once established, the costs of control could also be high. Control of this disease requires vigilance from all sectors of the industry, from growers through to merchants, packers, and retailers.



Ralstonia solanacearum sensu lato (RALSSO) - <https://gd.eppo.int>

Photo above: Brown rot symptoms on potato tuber, courtesy of EPPO.



Ralstonia solanacearum (RALSSL) - <https://gd.eppo.int>

Photo above: Brown rot symptoms on Bell pepper, courtesy of EPPO.

Forest and ornamental trees

We have updated authorised plant passporting traders over recent years about [Oak processionary moth \(*Thaumetopoea processionea*\) - Forest Research](#), a tree pest, because its caterpillars feed on the leaves of several species of oak trees. Large populations can strip whole oak trees bare, leaving them more vulnerable to other pests and diseases, and to other stresses, such as drought.

- They have a distinctive habit of moving about in late spring and early summer in nose-to-tail processions, from which they derive their name. The processions are often arrow-headed, with one leader and subsequent rows of several caterpillars abreast.
- They live and feed almost exclusively on oak trees. They can sometimes be seen processing across the ground between oak trees.



Photo above: OPM caterpillars (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) on an oak tree, courtesy of E. Birchall, APHA.

If you suspect you have found an OPM nest or caterpillars anywhere in England, Scotland or Wales, please report it to us immediately via [TreeAlert](#). Your reports will be assessed by our scientists and forwarded to the plant health authorities

for appropriate action. Or please report to your local APHA inspector or via [Reporting a pest/disease](#).

Phytophthora pluvialis is a fungus-like pathogen known to affect a variety of trees including western hemlock, tanoak, pine (*Pinus radiata*, *Pinus patula* and *Pinus strobus*) and Douglas-fir. Infections have been found in Cornwall, Devon, Cumbria and on one site in the northwest of Scotland. Symptoms are needle cast, shoot dieback, and lesions on the stem, branches, and roots, see the [Forest Research symptom guide](#).

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.

[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 or 0300 100 0313).

You can also get social with us:



Please contact the 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.