Animal & Plant Health Agency

Plant Passporting Update No. 50

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In this edition you can find information on:

Finding of Plane lace bug

The Forestry Commission can confirm that the plane lace bug (*Corythucha ciliata),* has been identified on plane trees in central London.

Corythucha ciliata is not a regulated pest which means there is no requirement to take statutory action, but we are conducting swift and robust investigations alongside wider environment surveillance to determine the full scale of the issue. This is in addition to annual surveillance already conducted on the health of plane trees in the area, and mobilisation of volunteers from the tree health monitoring Observatree project.

We advise the public to remain vigilant for signs of this pest and to report any suspected findings using our online portal TreeAlert.

The Defra Plant Pest Factsheet with more information on *Corythucha ciliata* is available on the Plant Health Portal.

Exports of High-Risk Plants to the EU and Northern Ireland

Over the last 3 years Defra worked with a group of stakeholders to submit the technical dossiers required to initiate the process of obtaining derogations from prohibitions on exports of High-Risk Plants to the EU and Northern Ireland (a full list of High-Risk Plants is available on GOV.UK.

The UK have now obtained derogations from prohibitions on exports for 14 High Risk Plant species, subject to certain phytosanitary conditions being met. These species are *Malus domestica*, *M. sylvestris, Ligustrum japonicum/L. delavayanum, Acer platanoides, A. palmatum, A. pseudoplatanus, A. campestre, Quercus robur, Q. petraea, Fagus sylvatica*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Corylus avellana, Ligustrum vulgare* and *L. ovalifolium.*

We have also submitted the technical dossiers for 28 further species, *Sorbus aucuparia, Cornus alba, C. sanguinea, Prunus avium, P. spinosa, P. persica, P. incisa, P. domestica, P. cerasifera, P. armeniaca, Betula pendula, B. pubescens, Tilia cordata, T. plathphyllos, Alnus cordata, A. glutinosa, A. incana, Populus alba, P. tremula, P. nigra, Salix caprea, S. cinerea, Taxus baccata, Lonicera ligustrina var. pileata, L. ligustrina var. yunnanensis, L. periclymenum, Berberis thunbergia, Castanea sativa*, and will shortly submit a dossier for *Ulmus minor*. The EU is currently reviewing these dossiers, and we anticipate that eventual derogations will be granted, subject to certain phytosanitary conditions being met. Please see the Plant Health Portal for updates on this work.

We are working with stakeholders on submitting further dossiers for species of *Hamamelis*, *Robinia*, *Jasminum*, *Fraxinus*, *Acacia* and *Albizia*, as well as for *Ficus carica*. High-Risk Plants for which the dossiers have not been submitted will continue to be classified as high-risk and the UK stakeholders will not be able to exports these plants to the EU or Northern Ireland. These plants include all plants in genera *Annona, Bauhinia, Caesalpinia, Cassia, Diospyros, Nerium, Persea,* plants of *Ullucus tuberosus*, wood of *Ulmus* and fruits of *Momordica*.

Following the submission of all the technical dossiers for which Defra has received stakeholder interest we will pause the submission of any further dossiers unless we receive any indication that there are further High-Risk Plant species that the industry would like Defra to work on. If there are further High-Risk Plant species that you may wish to export to the EU or Northern Ireland, please contact UKNPPO@defra.gov.uk directly to inform plant health officials in Defra.

Requirement for all ware potato growers to be registered with APHA in England and Wales

Over the coming weeks APHA will be working with key potato stakeholders across England and Wales to ensure all ware potato growers are aware of existing plant health requirements relating to the registration of ware growers as professional operators with APHA.

All ware potato growers in England and Wales **must** be registered with APHA as Professional Operators. This is so growers can be provided with a unique registration number that can be attached to ware potato loads as is required in the plant health regulations. The registration number provides both traceability and assurance that the potatoes have been grown by a registered producer.

Previously the AHDB managed the ware potato register. The maintenance of that register is now the responsibility of the competent authorities in England and Wales. To maintain the register growers must fill out a registration form once, which can be accessed on GOV.UK.

Following a successful registration, you will be provided with a unique registration number. You must ensure your registration number is put on the packaging, or in the case of loose-loaded potatoes transported in bulk, on the accompanying documents.

Growers only need to amend the registration form subsequently if their details or type of business changes.

Failure to become registered will mean you are not compliant with the regulations. Defra urge all ware potato growers to check their records to ensure they are registered as a professional operator and are using the unique registration number for their produce.

Post Planting Tree Survey

To develop the UK's Biosecurity an annual survey of high-risk imported trees is carried out. In addition to inspections carried out at the point of import, follow up inspections are planned post-planting to allow us to detect pests or diseases that were latent when the trees were imported. To make this possible, tracing of a selection of high-risk imported trees through the supply chain will be carried

out by APHA Plant Health Inspectors throughout the year to identify the planting sites of trees to enable post planting inspections.

Importers of the selected high-risk trees will be contacted by the plant health tracing team and asked to supply information about sales of the trees, the tracing will be carried out through the entre supply chain to final customer and planting site to allow post planting inspections to take place.

This is an official and mandatory request for information, which you are required to keep as part of plant passporting records, a timely response to the plant health tracing team will be greatly appreciated.

Northern Ireland plant health label (NIPHL) scheme

Reminder: NIPHL scheme authorisation lasts one year. If you are authorised for the scheme you will receive a reminder email one month before your authorisation is due to expire. If you want to renew your authorisation please follow the instructions in that email. Alternatively, if your inspector visits to conduct an annual records audit before your expiry date, you can ask them to renew your authorisation for you.

Reminder: There is guidance on GOV.UK that lists which plants must not be moved to Northern Ireland and which require growing season inspections. Speak to your inspector if you need further information. Regulated plants for planting under a Northern Ireland plant health label (NIPHL) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

UK interceptions of quarantine pests

You can find details of recent interceptions we've made on plants and plant material to date in 2024 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.

Recently in 2024, you will see instances of *Bemisia tabaci* on plants from the EU.

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

Popillia japonica

Popillia japonica more commonly known as the 'Japanese beetle', is a type of chafer beetle native to Japan. The beetle is highly polyphagous (eats many types of plant) including woody plants, with over 300 hosts in 79 plant families reported in the USA. While they are best known as defoliators, adults will also feed on fruit, while larval stages feed on and cause damage to turf and pasture. If introduced to the UK, it could have an impact on many crops and fruit trees, turf and ornamental garden species and plants of environmental importance.

See the factsheet to see more details of potential host plants. Also see other beetles *Popillia japonica* can be confused with, that occur in Great Britain.

Popillia japonica is notifiable, so if you suspect it please report it via report quarantine plant pest or disease.

Phytophthora austrocedrae

Phytophthora austrocedrae (Forestresearch) *(P. austrocedri*) is an aggressive, fungus-like pathogen which infects juniper and cypress trees (trees in the *Juniperus* and *Cupressus* genera), causing dieback and tree death.

The name was previously spelled *Phytophthora austrocedrae.*

The disease infects the bark and causes a bronze brown infected area, while the foliage will eventually also turn a bronze colour as the Juniper plant eventually dies. The disease can move around in ground water, foot ware and infected plants or trimmings.

Notify your local inspector if you suspect or find *P. austrocedri.*

Dieback within Juniper stand. Photo courtesy of E. Birchall, APHA.

Rusty red discolouration at ground level. Photo courtesy of E. Birchall, APHA.

Forest and ornamental trees

Dothistroma needle blight

Dothistroma needle blight (DNB) 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*.

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, as in the picture above.

A very similar disease can be caused by a related pathogen (disease-causing organism) called *Dothistroma pini*, but this is not thought to be present in the UK.


Dothistroma septosporum (SCIRPI) - https://gd.eppo.int

Symptoms of DNB on a pine tree. Photo courtesy of EPPO.

Phytophthora lateralis

Phytophthora lateralis (Forest Research) is a fungus-like plant pathogen which causes an often fatal disease of trees, mainly in the genus *Chamaecyparis*. Lawson's cypress (*C. lawsoniana*) is the primary host. P. lateralis is commonly found on *C. lawsoniana* in forests in the native range of this tree species in southern Oregon and northern California. The pathogen is also found in Canada. Typically, the main parts of the tree that becomes infected are the roots and stem base. The pathogen has occasionally been found to infect aerial parts.

See Phytophthora lateralis: Symptoms from Forest Research.

If you suspect *Phytophthora lateralis* , please report it via Reporting a pest/disease.

Emerald ash borer

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is an exotic beetle pest of ash trees (*Fraxinus* species). It is a member of the beetle family Buprestidae, and causes significant damage to the trees, including dieback and death.

There have been no reported discoveries of the pest in the United Kingdom (UK), but we remain vigilant for an accidental introduction. Suspected sightings must be notified immediately to the forestry authorities via TreeAlert.

Emerald ash borer is native to China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Mongolia and the Russian Far East.

In July 2002 it was identified as the cause of the decline and deaths of ash trees which had been causing concern for a number of years in Detroit in the USA. It is now established across many thousands of square miles of the USA and Canada.

It has also spread westwards across the Eurasian landmass as far west as Ukraine (2020). Before being confirmed in Ukraine, it had been spreading west and south from Moscow, in Russia, at a rate of up to 41 kilometres (25 miles) a year.

For more details on EAB and symptoms see Forestry Commission pest alert.

EAB is not present in the UK and is notifiable so please report it via report a pest or disease.

Photo courtesy of EPPO.

Note yellowing and thinning of foliage due to larval activity, this requires closer inspection to investigate other symptoms of EAB infestation, see Forestry Commission pest alert.

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.

Also on the Defra plant health portal are:

Pest factsheets – notifiable pests

Red_Palm_Weevil_Factsheet_2024.pdf (defra.gov.uk) – Red palm weevil factsheet update.

Platynota_Stultana_Factsheet_2024.pdf (defra.gov.uk) – *Platynota stultana* factsheet update.

Pest factsheets – non-notifiable pests

Takahashia_japonica_Factsheet_2024.pdf (defra.gov.uk) – String cottony scale insect factsheet update.

Box_tree_caterpillar_Factsheet_2024.pdf (defra.gov.uk) – Box tree caterpillar factsheet update.

Tasmanian_Eucalpytus_Beetle_Factsheet_2024.pdf (defra.gov.uk) – Tasmanian Eucalyptus beetle factsheet update.

Contingency plans for a range of pests and diseases. Contingency plans strengthen protection against plant pests and diseases inland 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 in to 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