



3rd March 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Response to the Great Britain policy review for hosts of *Agrilus planipennis*

Thank you for submitting views on the development of a GB policy position for amending the hosts of *Agrilus planipennis* (emerald ash borer, EAB) included in Annex 7 of the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation (assimilated [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/2072](#)). This letter is to notify you of the outcome.

Recommendations

The UK Plant Health Risk Group (PHRG) review presented the following recommendations:

- Remove *Juglans ailantifolia*, *J. mandshurica* (species of walnut) and *Pterocarya rhoifolia* (Japanese wingnut) as hosts of EAB. As a result, certain plants, wood and bark of these species will no longer need to meet specific import requirements to be imported into Great Britain.
- Regulate *Chionanthus virginicus* (fringetree) as a host of EAB, therefore certain plants, wood and bark of this species will need to comply with specific import requirements to be imported into Great Britain

Background

Emerald Ash Borer is a highly damaging pest on ash trees. It is currently absent from the UK, although it has spread from Asia to North America and parts of Europe. It is currently regulated as a Quarantine Pest in Great Britain, with associated special requirements which apply to the import of plants and wood of specified hosts. The regulations are kept under continuous review to ensure they reflect the current knowledge while maintaining biosecurity. The main hosts of EAB are *Fraxinus* (ash) species, and no changes are proposed to the regulations on ash. Other plant species listed as hosts have less evidence, and a review of the available literature was conducted. This led to the recommended changes to the hosts included in the Annex 7 listings.

Summary of responses

One response was received from the Wales Plant Health Evidence and Advisory Group, who did not comment on the proposed change to regulations. However, they did note that specimens of EAB from Japan may be a different subspecies with different host responses. Japanese populations may not have been explicitly tested for their response to *Juglans* hosts. The respondent recommended that the status of *Juglans* as a host should continue to be monitored, for EAB originating from certain regions.

Key concerns and government response

The Wales Plant Health Evidence and Advisory Group mentioned the pest risk analysis (PRA) carried out by EPPO in 2013. While there is uncertainty over the taxonomy, the PRA concludes later that only *Fraxinus* species were considered to be hosts. On page 12 of the EPPO PRA, there is detailed discussion of non-*Fraxinus* hosts. Two Japanese experts on *Agilus* species were contacted while writing the PRA, and both experts considered that non-*Fraxinus* host records for *A. planipennis* from Japan are incorrect. One of the Japanese experts consulted also stated that the non-*Fraxinus* records “were never supported by actual larva-to-adult rearing records”.

It should be noted that the EPPO PRA pre-dates the proven host status of *Chionanthus virginicus* in North America.

It is also worth noting that as a regulated quarantine pest in Great Britain, action would be taken if EAB were found on any plant, whether or not that host was named in the Annex 7 requirements. Therefore, if EAB were to be found in association with *Juglans* (or *Pterocarya*), action would still be taken against those trees on the basis that a quarantine pest was present.

Next steps

The response received had no objections to the conclusions of the UK PHRG, and on this basis, GB will make no further changes to the proposal. The GB Plant Health Services will continue to monitor new information on EAB very closely as part of our normal horizon scanning activities. This will include any new publications on host range, and whether any populations of EAB are able to develop on *Juglans* or any other plant genera.

I would like to thank those responding for taking the time to submit views on the stakeholder engagement. Your comments have been very valuable in helping to develop a policy position on this pest. I hope this letter demonstrates the reasoning behind our decision and that we have sought to find a solution which reflects the current position and the views expressed from different stakeholders. We will be pleased to continue engaging with you about this pest.

If you have any views about how this review was handled, or its outcome, please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

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