



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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15 February 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

## Response to stakeholder engagement on updating the *Xylella* medium-risk host list

Thank you for submitting views on the above stakeholder engagement. This letter is to notify you of the outcome.

### Background

The phytosanitary import regime in Great Britain is not static and is kept under continuous review to ensure it continues to address any biosecurity risk posed to the UK, and that it meets our WTO obligations by being risk-based.

*Xylella fastidiosa* (“*Xylella*”) is a bacterium which causes disease in a wide range of commercially grown plants such as grapevine, citrus, olive and several species of broadleaf trees widely grown in the UK, as well as many shrubs and herbaceous plants.

New stringent measures against *Xylella* were introduced from 2021 in Annex 7 of the retained [Implementing Regulation 2019/2072](#). These measures increased the restrictions and requirements for the import of high-risk host plants, *Polygala myrtifolia*, *Coffea* sp., *Olea europaea*, *Prunus dulcis*, *Lavandula* sp., *Salvia rosmarinus* and *Nerium oleander*, to reduce the chances that *Xylella* is introduced into Great Britain. Measures were also introduced against medium-risk host plants of *Xylella*. A full list of *Xylella* hosts is provided on the Plant Health Portal (see Table 5 [here](#)).

### Proposal

To update the full list of *Xylella* hosts (Table 5) to include any changes to the medium-risk host plants, such as taxonomic revisions and additional host findings. This will enhance the level of protection against the risk of *Xylella* entering Great Britain via imported plants.



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It will complement existing protections, including the key mitigations already in place against the highest risk hosts. No changes are proposed for the high-risk host list.

## **Summary of responses**

Two responses were received, these were from:

- Horticultural Trade Association (HTA)
- One private nursery

The HTA ascertained no significant disruption to trade from this proposal, though noted that the new additions to the medium-risk *Xylella* host list were of obvious concern. They stated that they fully accepted the necessity to add these genera/species to the *Xylella* host list and that they would incorporate these into their biosecurity protocols operated by HTA member businesses.

The private nursery was positive and in support of the proposal to update the list of *Xylella* hosts.

## **Next steps**

The responses received were generally supportive of updating the aforementioned host list. The UK Plant Health Risk Group intends to implement this proposal from 15 April 2024.

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 working to develop a policy position.

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

Yours faithfully,

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