

Bemisia tabaci: risk to Poinsettia

- *Bemisia tabaci* (tobacco whitefly) is a pest of a wide range of plants, including vegetables, salad crops and ornamentals, and is a vector of more than 110 viruses. It is unlikely to establish outdoors in the UK, but outbreaks occur in protected crop situations.
- The pest is frequently intercepted on ornamentals in the UK and in 2018 there has been a higher than usual incidence on Poinsettias grown in other parts of Europe, leading to cancellations of deliveries and growers in the UK suffering from shortages.
- *Bemisia tabaci* can cause direct damage by feeding and indirect damage through honeydew egestion. However, the viruses vectored by the pest have the greatest impact and can cause total failure of susceptible crops.

Consider carefully your sourcing of Poinsettias – protect your business and others by only using reputable and authorised suppliers of Poinsettias



Fig. 1: Adult *Bemisia tabaci*.
Photo courtesy of Fera.



Fig. 2: Pupa (fourth larval stage) of
Bemisia tabaci. Photo courtesy of Fera.



Fig. 3: Inspection of Poinsettias in
glasshouse © Crown copyright

If you suspect the presence of *Bemisia tabaci*, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

Tel: 01904 405138

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gsi.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

For Scotland, contact the Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit:

Email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

Web: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth>

For Northern Ireland, contact DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: www.daera-ni.gov.uk