



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

26th May 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Deregulating certain GB Quarantine Pests

I am writing to notify you of the planned changes to deregulate certain quarantine pests (QPs). These changes should take effect by November 2023.

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.

Certain pests are regulated as GB QPs, based on criteria to determine their capacity to be introduced to Great Britain and to cause damage. As a result, the introduction or movement of QPs within Great Britain on any host material is prohibited. If a QP is identified, action must be taken to prevent the spread of the pest. In addition, certain requirements on imported host material may be put in place to manage the risk of this pest spreading to Great Britain.

Issue

We have identified several pests that we believe no longer meet the criteria for QPs. We therefore plan to remove these pests from the QP list in Annex 2 of the retained Implementing Regulation 2019/2072 (“the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation”), and any relevant import requirements (see Appendix A) against these pests listed in Annex 7 of the same regulation. Please view Appendix B for the full list of pests to be deregulated and the full justification for this proposal.

Any comments should be sent to plantpestrisks@defra.gov.uk by 18th August 2023.



Comments provided in response to this letter, including personal information, may be made available to the public on request, in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental information Regulations 2004 (EIRs)

If you do not wish your response, including your name, contact details and any other personal information, to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your comments. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for the information under freedom of information legislation. However, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

Yours faithfully

Richard McIntosh
Assistant Chief Plant Health Officer
Defra
T: +44 (0)208 026 2396
M: +44 (0)7767 357817
richard.mcintosh@defra.gov.uk

Appendix A

Pests to be deregulated

Pseudomonas syringae pv. *Persicae*

Haplaxius crudus

Coconut lethal yellowing phytoplasma/ Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas

Cowpea mild mottle virus

The import requirements to be removed from Annex 7 (only in relation to the specified pests) Note that for point 8 (below) only Cowpea mild mottle virus will be deregulated these requirements will be retained for all other viruses currently included in that point.

8.	Plants for planting, other than dormant plants, plants in tissue culture, seeds, bulbs, tubers, corms and rhizomes	Any third country where any of the following GB quarantine pests are known to occur ("the relevant pests"): —Cowpea mild mottle virus, —	<p>The plants must be accompanied by an official statement:</p> <p>(a) in all cases, that no symptoms of the relevant pests have been observed on the plants during their complete cycle of vegetation, and</p> <p>(b) in the case of plants originating in any third country where <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> (Gennadius) or other vectors of the relevant pests are known to occur, that no symptoms of the relevant pests have been observed on the plants during their complete cycle of vegetation and:</p> <p>(i) that the plants originate in areas which, in accordance with the measures specified in ISPM4, are known to be free from <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> (Gennadius) and other vectors of the relevant pests,</p> <p>(ii) that the site of production has been found free from <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> (Gennadius) and other vectors of the relevant plant pests on official inspections carried out at appropriate times to detect those pests, or</p> <p>(iii) that the plants have been subjected to an effective treatment ensuring the</p>
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			eradication of <i>Bemisia tabaci</i> (Gennadius) and the other vectors of the relevant pests and have been found free from those pests prior to export.
78.	Plants for planting, other than seeds, of <i>Prunus persica</i> (L.) Batsch and <i>Prunus salicina</i> Lindley	Any third country	<p>The plants must be accompanied by:</p> <p>(a) an official statement that they originate in an area which, in accordance with the measures specified in ISPM4, is known to be free from <i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> pv. <i>persicae</i> (Prunier, Luisetti & Gardan) Young, Dye & Wilkie, or</p> <p>(b) an official statement no symptoms of diseases caused by the <i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> pv. <i>persicae</i> (Prunier, Luisetti & Gardan) Young, Dye & Wilkie have been observed on plants at the place of production, since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation and any symptomatic plants in the immediate vicinity have been rogued out and destroyed immediately.</p>
92.	Plants for planting, other than seeds, of <i>Aeraceae</i> (Palmae)	Any third country other than: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canary Islands, EU Member States, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Russia (only the following parts: Central Federal District (Tsentralny federalny okrug), Northwestern Federal District (Severo-Zapadny federalny okrug), Southern Federal District (Yuzhny federalny okrug), North Caucasian Federal District (Severo-Kavkazsky federalny okrug) and	<p>The plants must be accompanied by:</p> <p>(a) an official statement that the plants originate in an area known to be free from Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas and no symptoms have been observed at the place of production or in its immediate vicinity since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation,</p> <p>(b) an official statement that no symptoms of Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas have been observed on the plants since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation, and plants at the place of production which have shown symptoms giving rise to the suspicion of contamination by those pests have been rogued out at that place and the plants have undergone appropriate treatment to</p>

		Volga Federal District (Privolzhsky federalny okrug)., San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine.	rid them of Haplaxius crudus (Van Duzee), or (c) in the case of plants in tissue culture, an official statement that the plants are derived from plants which have met the requirements in point (a) or (b).
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Appendix B

Quarantine pest review

Context

The quarantine pest lists have been reviewed to ensure pests are appropriately regulated.

Introduction

A quarantine pest (QP) is defined as such if it fulfils all the following conditions:

1. The taxonomic identity of the pest shall be clearly defined or, alternatively, the pest shall have been shown to produce consistent symptoms and to be transmissible;
2. The pest is not present in the territory, or, if present, is not widely distributed within the territory;
3. The pest is capable of entering into, becoming established in and spreading within the territory, or, if present in the territory, but not widely distributed, is capable of entering into, becoming established in and spreading within those parts of the territory where it is absent;
4. The pest's entry, establishment and spread would have an unacceptable economic, environmental or social impact on that territory, or, if present but not widely distributed, for those parts of the territory where it is absent;
5. There are feasible and effective measures available to prevent the entry into, establishment in or spread of that pest within, the territory and to mitigate the risks and impact thereof.

These criteria were introduced following the adoption of EU Regulation 2016/2031. This was followed by Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072, which included a list of QPs and the measures required against them.

As of 2021, relevant EU requirements have been retained in GB legislation, including those relating to QPs. The QPs are listed in Annex 2 of the retained Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation and the measures required against them are listed in Annex 7 and 8 of the regulation. Provisional QPs, which meet the criteria of a QP on the basis of a preliminary assessment but are not yet listed as a QP, are also listed in Annex 2A of the regulation.

Following a review, this paper recommends 4 pests for de-regulation which do not meet QP criteria. Information in this paper has been taken from UK risk analyses and the EPPO Global Database. Risk Register ratings can be found for each species here - [UK Plant Health Risk Register \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://www.defra.gov.uk/health-risk-register/).

Pests proposed for de-regulation

Palm pests

1. Coconut lethal yellowing phytoplasma (Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas)*

Mitigated Risks		show / hide
Likelihood [1 - 5]	1	
Entry [1 - 5]	2	
Establishment [1 - 5]	1	
Spread [1 - 5]	2	
Impact [1 - 5]	2	
Value at Risk [1 - 5]	2	
Likelihood x Impact [1 - 25]	2	
UK Relative Risk Rating [1 - 125]	4	

Figure 9. Mitigated Risk Register ratings for coconut lethal yellowing phytoplasma.

Hosts – The main host is coconut (*Cocos nucifera*), but the disease has also been found on dates (*Phoenix dactylifera*) and *P. canariensis*, as well as much more occasionally infecting other species of palm.

Distribution – It is present in the Americas, including the USA, Mexico and much of the Caribbean.

Impacts – Millions of coconut palms have been killed by the disease in the Caribbean, Mexico and Florida. The disease can have major impacts on tourism, as palms along coastlines are killed. The disease has also destroyed 70% of coconut plantations in Honduras and has had major impacts on coconut production elsewhere. Phoenix palms are also killed by the disease.

The phytoplasma is transmitted by *Haplaxius crudus*, the American palm cixiid, which is absent from the UK and, based on its current distribution (it is not found further north than Texas), it is considered very unlikely to be able to establish in the UK. There may be other vectors that have yet to be identified.

Categorisation – It is on a number of quarantine pest lists, including EPPO, the EU, and Turkey.

Conclusion – It does not meet QP criteria, as it is unlikely to establish in GB. The known vector is very unlikely to survive in the UK and there are no other known potential vectors already present in the UK.

*In Annex 2 of the GB PCR this pest is named as Coconut lethal yellowing phytoplasma in Annex 7 the synonym Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas is used.

2. *Haplaxius crudus* (American palm cixiid)

Mitigated Risks		show / hide	
Likelihood [1 - 5]	1		
Entry [1 - 5]	2		
Establishment [1 - 5]	1		
Spread [1 - 5]	2		
Impact [1 - 5]	2		
Value at Risk [1 - 5]	2		
Likelihood x Impact [1 - 25]	2		
UK Relative Risk Rating [1 - 125]	4		

Figure 10. Mitigated Risk Register ratings for *Haplaxius crudus*.

Hosts – Leafhopper of coconut and other palms. The preimaginal stages feed on the roots of turf grasses growing in the vicinity of the palms.

Distribution – It is present from northern South America to southern USA.

Impacts – It is not a major pest of palms.

Categorisation – It is on the quarantine pest lists of Bahrain, the EU, Georgia, Jordan, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey.

Conclusion - It does not meet QP criteria, as it is unlikely to establish. The American palm cixiid is absent from the UK and, based on its current distribution (it is not found further north than Texas), it is considered very unlikely to be able to establish in the UK.

Bemisia tabaci vectored viruses

3. Cowpea mild mottle virus (CPMMV)

Mitigated Risks		show / hide	
Likelihood [1 - 5]	2		
Spread [1 - 5]	3		
Impact [1 - 5]	1		
Value at Risk [1 - 5]	3		
Likelihood x Impact [1 - 25]	2		
UK Relative Risk Rating [1 - 125]	6		

Figure 11. Mitigated Risk Register ratings for cowpea mild mottle virus.

Hosts – Natural hosts include *Canavalia ensiformis*, groundnuts (*Arachis hypogaea*), *Phaseolus lunatus*, *P. vulgaris*, *Psophocarpus tetragonolobus*, soyabeans (*Glycine max*), tomatoes (*Lycopersicon esculentum*), *Vigna mungo*, probably aubergines (*Solanum melongena*), cowpeas cv. Blackeye (*Vigna unguiculata*), *Vicia faba* and *Vigna*

subterranea. The virus also occurs in various weeds (Fabaceae), including *Stylosanthes* and *Tephrosia* spp. Many more hosts can be artificially inoculated.

Distribution – It has a scattered distribution across Africa, Asia, Oceania, and North and South America.

Impacts – CPMMV was first described as widespread in eastern Ghana on cowpeas. It causes a disease of soyabeans and groundnuts in Kenya, of soyabeans in Côte d'Ivoire and of groundnuts in India. It occurs on soyabean and groundnut in many southeast Asian countries. However, in accounts of the viruses of soyabean and groundnut, CPMMV was not considered to be of any very great importance economically. The strain on tomato in Israel seems to be only a curiosity, found on a few plants. In Brazil, CPMMV has been recorded on *Phaseolus vulgaris*, on which it causes angular mosaic, but losses are small. In Nigeria, an 'extra mild' isolate of CPMMV has been recorded on soyabeans. One study covering viruses of *Phaseolus vulgaris* did not consider CPMMV important enough to be mentioned.

Categorisation – It is on the quarantine pest lists of Bahrain, the EU, Jordan, Moldova, the USA, Tunisia, and Turkey.

Conclusion – It does not meet QP criteria, as it is unlikely to cause economic, environmental, or social impacts in GB. According to EPPO, the virus principally attacks tropical field crops, rather than glasshouse or vegetable crops. It is very doubtful whether it rates as having quarantine significance for EPPO in relation to soyabean or groundnut, and its importance on *Phaseolus vulgaris* and tomato (which are very important for EPPO) is so small that it can be ignored. EPPO does not recommend listing it as a quarantine pest.

Other pests

4. *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *persicae*

Mitigated Risks		show / hide	
Likelihood [1 - 5]	2		
Spread [1 - 5]	2		
Impact [1 - 5]	3		
Value at Risk [1 - 5]	1		
Likelihood x Impact [1 - 25]	6		
UK Relative Risk Rating [1 - 125]	6		

Figure 18. Mitigated Risk Register ratings for *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *persicae*.

Hosts – Main hosts of the pathogen include *Prunus persica* (peach) and *Prunus persica* var. *nucipersica* (nectarine). Other hosts include *Prunus salicina* (Japanese plum) and possibly *Prunus cerasifera* (Myrobalan plum).

Distribution – The pathogen is present and widespread in New Zealand and is present in Croatia and France.

Impacts – This disease has a high economic impact in growing regions of *P. persica* under certain conditions. In 1985, *P. s. pv. persicae* was responsible for the death of more than one million young *P. persica* trees in the central Rhône valley in France. Peach trees are no longer planted in regions like the Ardèche due to its devastating impact. Its spread is favoured by using susceptible cultivars, certain pedo-climatic conditions and pruning without adequate hygiene measures. The impacts of this disease in France are now low, which is probably a result of not planting in regions with favourable pedo-climatic conditions.

Pseudomonas syringae pv. *persicae* has been shown to be a weak pathogen of Japanese plum, with symptoms rarely developing past tip dieback and occasional leaf spots.

Categorisation – It is on a number of quarantine pest lists, including EPPO and the EU.

Conclusion – It does not meet QP criteria, as it is unlikely to cause significant impacts in GB. Severe impacts have been reported for peach and nectarine, but these are not hosts of great importance to the UK. There is also uncertainty around whether the UK has a suitable climate for disease development.

Benefits and risks

The main benefits from removing these pests from legislation are as follows:

- It reduces any disproportionate action on consignments where these pests are found.
- Government resources can be more effectively focused on areas of higher biosecurity concern (as no need to spend resources on surveying for these pests as part of a multi-annual surveillance programme).
- The quarantine pest list will be rationalised, focusing the list on pests that are of concern.
- It complies with the International Plant Protection Convention – Contracting parties may apply phytosanitary measures only where such measures are necessary to prevent the introduction and/or spread of quarantine pests and contracting parties shall technically justify phytosanitary measures “on the basis of conclusions reached by using an appropriate pest risk analysis or, where applicable, another comparable examination and evaluation of available scientific information.”

No significant biosecurity risks are anticipated, due to the reasons outlined in the Conclusions above.