



Animal & Plant Health Agency

Plant Passporting Updates No.33: May 2021

Dear plant passporters, in this edition are items on:

- E-learning for UK authorised plant passporters
- Oak Processionary Moth caterpillars have emerged
- Defra consultation on two pests
- New GB legislation against *Agilus bilineatus* (Two-Lined Chestnut borer) and *Neocerambyx raddei* (Chestnut Trunk borer)
- National Plant Health week 10-16th May
- Seasonal pests and diseases on ornamentals, forest trees and edibles
- Pest factsheet update – Brown Marmorated Stink bug

e-learning for UK authorised plant passporters

Defra would like to [announce the launch of a Plant Passport E-Learning Module](#) developed and funded by Defra, in conjunction with the Animal & Plant Health Agency and the Horticultural Trades Association.

The module has been launched on 12 May 2021, the first 10,000 courses are free and voluntary to use. Visit [plant health portal e-learning](#) to see what the module does, who it is available to and how to access it.

You do not need to complete the module immediately, but if you choose to use the module it is recommended that you complete it

ahead of your next plant passport audit visit by your local inspector.

Further resources to aid compliance with the plant passport system will be made available over the coming months.

Oak Processionary Moth

Oak processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) (OPM) caterpillars were first spotted emerging from their egg plaques in London on the 14th of April 2021 – later than in 2020. From surveying and monitoring activity over the past two years, Forestry Commission colleagues specialising in OPM and teams have identified more than 2000 sites (areas with one or more trees) for treatment in the [Control Zone](#).

For movements within Great Britain, (Pest Free Area – PFA) UK plant passports will be required regarding OPM and the relevant EPPO code to use is 'THAUPR'.

For the OPM PFA, the relevant commodities and the special requirements for the movement of oak plants remain the same as they were for the previous EU designated Protected Zone (Plants for planting, other than fruits and seeds, of *Quercus* L., other than *Quercus suber* L., of a girth of at least 8 cm measured at a height of 1.2 m from the root collar).

Defra consultation on two pests

Please review and comment on two GB summaries of EPPO Pest Risk Analyses (PRAs) are now available for consultation, please send comments back to Defra (as per details in the letters) by 9th June 2021.

The pests are:

- *Elasmopalpus lignosellus* (the lesser cornstalk borer) is a serious moth pest of cereal and legume crops in the Americas which has also been known to cause damage to seedlings of both broadleaved and coniferous nursery trees. The lesser cornstalk borer is a polyphagous pest in the Americas and was intercepted in asparagus from Peru by the UK for the first time in 2019. The pest was initially identified as a potential risk to a number of UK hosts, and action was taken against findings, but there were significant uncertainties surrounding the climatic suitability of the UK which initiated the PRA. Please see the attached [Defra letter on *Elasmopalpus lignosellus*](#) for further information.
- *Monochamus guttulatus* is a longhorn beetle pest of a wide range of broadleaved hosts in the Russian Far East, northern China and Korea. The pest causes no significant economic impact in its current distribution. The available information about the pest is very limited with very high degrees of uncertainty surrounding every aspect of the PRA. Several broadleaved tree species in the UK could be considered at risk of this pest, as well as potential damage to the timber industry. If established, eradication from the wider environment would be difficult, but may be aided by the slow rate of natural spread expected for this pest. Please see the attached [Defra letter on *Monochamus guttulatus*](#) for further information.

New GB measures against *Agrilus bilineatus* and *Neocerambyx raddei*

In June 2021, Defra will introduce legislation which implements national measures for *Agrilus bilineatus* and *Neocerambyx raddei* following a Pest Risk Analysis and a [consultation on the proposed measures](#) for each pest. The WTO have been notified of these new measures, which will come into force in June 2021.

Please refer to the [Q&A document](#) for more information. Brief details of the pests are below:

- *Agrilus bilineatus* (Two-Lined Chestnut borer) is a highly damaging wood borer of oak and chestnut, which is commonly associated with oak mortality in the USA, and first reported in Turkey in 2002. European species of oak are known to be vulnerable to attack and the UK climate is suitable for its establishment.
- *Neocerambyx raddei* (Chestnut Trunk borer) is a Longhorn beetle affecting mainly oak species in North-East Asia, with the potential to be introduced to the UK via trees for planting (including bonsais) or firewood. Host susceptibility of European species of oak and sweet chestnut should continue to be monitored through existing sentinel trees project.

National Plant Health week

This week is our second National Plant Health Week 10-16 May. Defra, APHA, FC and a number of organisations in the plant sector are raising awareness through a social media campaign about plant health, and actions people can take to keep plants healthy. Adam Frost from Gardeners World is also supporting the week. Defra and many others include the HTA, RHS, Tree Council, UKRI will be posting on social media using the hashtag #PlantHealthWeek. Please do like and share posts. There are also some webinars planned.

Please see the [Plant Health Action website](#) for more information on events throughout the year and actions you can take.

Seasonal pests and diseases

Help prevent these pests and disease from entering and being spread in the UK, we have included information on various pest threats below:

Ornamentals

- Xylella fastidiosa is a bacterial disease with many sub species and strains not known to occur in the UK. On Thursday 11th February 2021 Defra introduced legislation which implements new measures for Xylella following the consultation and [Defra's response](#). The new legislation is [summarised in this letter](#) with further details provided in an [annex](#). The list of Xylella hosts is found in [Table 5](#). Please refer to this Q&A document for more information.

The new measures came into force on 4th March 2021.

- Herbaceous and ornamentals – Factsheet for growers on pest and disease [threats to herbaceous and ornamentals](#). The factsheet covers a range of quarantine threats including whiteflies, leafminers, thrips, moths, mites, gall midges, nematodes, Xylella fastidiosa and a virus of Alstroemeria.

Forest trees

- Threat to UK conifer forests posed by [Ips bark beetles](#). Ips typographus is a destructive bark beetle and has periodically killed millions of spruce trees across Europe and Asia. Use this link to read how this report describes the biological and environmental factors that influence attack frequency and severity from Ips bark beetles and assesses strategies for their management, with emphasis on the major threat posed by I. typographus.

Edibles

- Factsheet on [pests of tomatoes](#), this factsheet cover various viruses, nematodes and bacterial diseases.
- Factsheet on [tomato Pinworm](#) (*Keiferia lycopersicella*) is a pest of tomatoes in North America. It has caused foliage and fruit damage to crops in the United States, with reports of up to 80% of fruit in infested fields damaged over the growing season. In 2008, *K. lycopersicella* was found for the first time in Italy, where it was causing severe damage to a crop of tomatoes along with *Tuta absoluta* (the South American tomato moth). *Keiferia lycopersicella* has not been intercepted in the UK to date.
- Pest alert on [Grape phylloxera](#) is a small sap sucking insect that is related to aphids' and is one of the most important pests of grapevine in Europe. As such it poses a real threat to the UK's highly valuable wine industry.

Factsheet update

Pest factsheet update on [Brown Marmorated Stink bug](#) (*Halyomorpha-halys*) is a pest of many edible and ornamental crops, native to east Asia and now present in Europe.

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).

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