<u>**Smarter Rules for Safer Foods**</u>
<u>**Plant Health Regulation – 3rd Country Import and High Risk Plants**</u>

The new Plant Health Regulation (PHR) and Official Controls Regulation (OCR) will apply directly to the UK from 14th December 2019. This fact sheet outlines what will be changing for importers of plants, plant products and other objects from countries outside of the European Union and what UK businesses need to do to prepare.

These changes apply to UK businesses involved in the agri-food chain including activities such as the production, manufacture and supply of plants, seeds, timber and plant products.

What are the Plant Health and Official Controls Regulations?
- The EU PHR and OCR apply to EU member states from 14 December 2019.
- The regulations are part of a wider set of changes which are being introduced in the EU under the Smarter Rules for Safer Food (SRSF) package.
- Plant health helps agriculture and forestry sectors remain sustainable and competitive, as well as protecting domestic biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Globalised trade and climate change now present a greater risk to these sectors. The new EU PHR sets out controls and restrictions that will apply to imports and internal movement within the UK and the EU of certain plants, plant pests, and other materials like soil; helping to reduce these risks.
- The new regulation will apply to the UK whilst we are a member of the EU and during any transition period. If the UK were to leave the EU without a deal, the regulations will be retained by the Withdrawal Act and will continue to apply subject to any amendments Parliament may agree.

Changes will happen in these four areas:

1. **New classification of High Risk Plants**
2. **A greater number of products will need a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC)**
3. **Border control terminology**
4. **Minimum notification requirement.**

What will be changing?

1. **New classification of 'high risk' plants:**
   The PHR introduces a new category of 'high risk' plants. The import of any 'high risk' plants and plant products to the EU from all third countries will be prohibited until a full risk assessment is conducted by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). These plants and plant products have been listed as 'high risk' on the basis of a preliminary risk assessment, taking into account pest pathways
2. **Increased scope of phytosanitary certificates**
   - Under the new regulation, more plants and plant products will need a PC. All plants and living parts of plants, including seeds intended for planting, will need to be accompanied by a PC for import into the EU from 14 December 2019, unless they are listed as exempt from this requirement.
   - There are currently five tropical fruits listed that will not require a PC for import into the EU: pineapple, coconut, durian, banana and dates.
3. **Border Control Terminology**
   - Designated Points of Entry (DPE) will be automatically re-designated as Border Control Posts (BCPs). You will no longer have a DPE to refer to. These will become BCPs.

- Plants and plant materials that require plant health controls for entry to the EU will continue to be inspected at the BCPs as per current procedure.

4. **Minimum notification requirement**
   - There is a change in the minimum time required to notify of a consignment arrival.
   - Minimum period for prior notification of a consignment is now one working day, or four hours for shorter journeys.

What do I need to do now?

I**f you import plants and plant products from countries outside the EU?**
   - Ensure that your supplier is aware of the new requirements for PCs. Search 'phytosanitary certificates' on GOV.UK.
   - Check that the products you import from third countries are not prohibited under the new high-risk plants list. More information and guidance found by searching 'High risk plants' on the official website of the European Union
   - If goods that you import are now prohibited, encourage your supplier to contact their National Plant Protection Organisation as soon as possible. Request they submit an application for exemption from the high-risk prohibition by providing specific information in a technical dossier to the European Commission.

What if my business exports plants and plant products to countries outside the EU?
   - There will be no changes to existing requirements and processes, more information can be found on GOV.UK.
   - Exporters are always advised to check with the relevant plant health authority in the importing country to find out exactly what controls will apply when exporting plants and plant products.

For any technical help, you can email your questions to: **SRSF@APHA.gov.uk**

You can find further information about the regulations on the UK Plant Health Portal or on **GOV.UK.**

Please continue to look out for further communications ahead of 14 December.