Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Smarter Rules for Safer Foods
Plant Health Regulation – Plant Passports

The new Plant Health Regulation (PHR) became applicable in the UK from 14 December 2019. This fact sheet outlines what will be changing for Plant Passports (PP) and what UK businesses need to do to.

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

What is the Plant Health Regulation?
- The PHR is part of a wider set of changes which have been introduced across the European Union (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 PHR sets out controls and restrictions that will apply to imports and internal movement within the UK and the wider EU of certain plants, plant pests, and other materials like soil; helping to reduce these risks.
- The PHR applies in 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.
- Guidance on issuing plant passports under the new PHR is available on GOV.uk **here**.

Changes will happen in the following areas:
- All plants for planting require a PP
- The content and format of PPs has changed
- Authorisation of Professional Operators to issue PPs
- Attachment of the PP
- Record keeping
- Exemptions from passporting

What has changed?

Plant Passports (PP):
- The content and format of the PP, how it is attached to the consignment or plant, the number and variety of businesses that need to be authorised to issue PPs have changed. More information and guidance can be found by visiting GOV.uk **here** and the Plant Health Portal **here**.
- More regulated plants and plant products require a PP for movement within the UK and the EU. The list of plants which require a PP is available **here**. The list of plants which require a PP for a Protected Zone is available **here**.
- The list includes, but is not limited to, all plants for planting. This means: plants to be planted, plants that remain planted, or plants that may be replanted; some seeds; seed potatoes; wood and bark; some fruits with leaves.

- The PHR sets out a list of quarantine pests (Union Quarantine Pests) and pests and their hosts (plants/seeds), known as **Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests (RNQPs),** which are regulated.
- Plants that may be hosts of RNQPs require a PP. These plants are also be subject to a range of measures to control the presence of RNQPs including inspections, sampling and/or testing. More information and guidance can be found in Annexes IV and V **here**.

Authorisation to issue PPs:

If you are new to plant passporting:

- You will need to register and apply to issue PPs with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in England and Wales. To do this, complete the APPreg form, Application for Registration, and Application for Authorisation form, APPauth, from **here** and email/send to**:** plantpassportregistration@apha.gov.uk

If your business is already issuing PPs:

- Your registration will be rolled over, you need to apply annually for authorisation as previously.
- Businesses whose principle place of business is in Scotland or Northern Ireland should contact the competent authorities in those territories for further advice on registration and authorisation.

Attaching PPs to products:

- Under the new regulations the PP must be attached to the smallest tradeable unit.
- All online and distance sales must have a PP provided to the final consumer.

Record keeping:

- Your records must allow APHA to investigate any plant pest or disease outbreak. You must keep records of all PPs for three years.
- If a supplier sends you a PP in the form of a label, you may store this physically or digitally. You don't have to keep supplier documents.

Exemptions from passporting:

- You are exempt from PPs if you supply small quantities of plants and plant products exclusively and directly to final users through means other than distance contracts. Final users are those buying plants and plant products exclusively for personal use and not for business purposes.

What does your businesses need to do now?

1. Further information can be found on GOV.uk **here** and in the PP introductory guide published on the UK Plant Health Portal **here**.
2. Check that you are using the correct format for your PP. Guidance is available on **GOV.uk** and the **Plant Health Portal**.
3. Ensure you are registered as a professional operator with APHA and that you have applied for authorisation to issue PPs.
4. Check if you trade in products that have 'Protected Zone' (PZ) status. A current list of 'PZ' products can be found **here**.
5. If you trade in a forestry product, visit **GOV.UK** to find out more about plant passporting for timber and wood products.
6. Guidance will soon be made available if you trade in certified seed. Please continue to check the Plant Health Portal SRSF page for the latest updates.
7. Take note of what trade units you receive and supply to find out how to attach your PP to trollies, trays, or individual pots.
8. Ensure you can meet requirements around traceability and record keeping, guidance is available on **GOV.uk**.

9. Read guidance on what checks you may need regarding pests and diseases that your plants or plant products may be hosts to in order to issue a PP. Check the Defra Plant Health Risk Register and SRSF GOV.UK page for updates.

Where can I find more information?
- For more information on Plant Health Regulations, visit the **SRSF GOV.UK page**
- For more information on plant health controls and resources such as information on pests and diseases, visit the **Plant Health Portal**
- For more information on issuing plant passports visit **GOV.uk**
- For any technical help, you can email your questions to: **Apha_srsfmailbox@apha.gov.uk**