



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

helpline@defra.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

25 October 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

## Response to stakeholder engagement on deregulating certain GB Quarantine Pests (QPs)

Thank you for submitting views on the above stakeholder engagement. This letter is to notify you of the outcome.

### 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.

### Proposal

To deregulate several pests (namely, *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Persicae*, *Haplaxius crudus*, Coconut lethal yellowing phytoplasma/Palm lethal yellowing phytoplasmas, Cowpea mild mottle virus) that we believe no longer meet the criteria for QPs. These pests would be removed from the QP list in Annex 2 of the retained Implementing Regulation 2019/2072 (“the Phytosanitary Conditions Regulation”), as would any relevant import requirements against these pests listed in Annex 7 of the same regulation.

### Summary of responses

Three responses were received, these were from:

- Horticultural Trade Association (HTA)



- Farming Connect (Horticulture)
- One private nursery

The responses from the HTA and the private nursery were positive and welcomed the proposals to deregulate these pests. The HTA commended the UK Plant Health Services for undergoing reviews to unburden trade wherever possible.

Farming Connect (Horticulture) made it clear that although they did not seek to object to the proposal, they requested that these reviews considered crops that could potentially be grown in the UK in future and the persistence of endemic disease. They pointed out that a potential host of *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Persicae* is *Prunus cerasifera* (Myrobalan plum), which is widely naturalised in the UK, where the pest could persist.

#### Response:

*The UK Plant Health Services conduct a systematic, proactive screening of potential new and emerging plant health risks, as listed in the UK Plant Health Risk Register. Risks are reviewed monthly by the UK Plant Health Risk Group and Ministers to ensure that the UK plant health regime addresses any biosecurity risk posed to the UK, via actions such as surveillance, enhanced inspection, regulation, national measures, import controls, research and awareness raising. Any new threats associated with these pests that are considered to pose a significant risk could result in regulations being reintroduced.*

*In the case of *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Persicae*, given the concerns raised above, *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Persicae* has been removed from the deregulatory proposal and will be regulated as it is currently.*

#### **Next steps**

The responses received were generally supportive of deregulating the aforementioned pests. Defra, Scottish Government and Welsh Government intend to implement this proposal, with the exception of *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *Persicae*, from 24 November 2023.

I would like to thank those responding for taking the time to submit views on the stakeholder engagement. Your comments have been very valuable in working to develop a policy position.

If you have any views about how this review was handled, or its outcome, please let me know.

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](mailto:richard.mcintosh@defra.gov.uk)