



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

**SMARTER RULES FOR SAFER FOODS – PLANT HEALTH REGULATION
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Contents

1. SRSF General Information
2. Plant Health Regulation (PHR) General Information
3. Plant Health Definitions
4. Plant Passports
5. Attaching Plant Passports
6. Registration and Authorisation to issue Plant Passports
7. Content and Format of Plant Passports
8. Requirements of Issuing Plant Passports
9. Non Compliance
10. Phytosanitary certificates for plants and plant products
11. High Risk Plants
12. High Risk Plant Listing
13. Official Controls Regulation & OCR Changes in Plants
14. PPPs

Version Control

Version number	Cleared by	Date
1.0	APHA, SRSF Programme Team, EU Imports and Exports	10/03/20

1. General Information

1.1 What is Smarter Rules for Safer Food?

The [smarter rules for safer food \(SRSF\) package](#) is a set of EU regulations for the protection against animal disease, plant pests, and for the organisation and performance of official controls. The package modernises, simplifies and improves the former health and safety standards for the agri-food chain. It takes a risk-based approach to animal, plant and public health protection, introducing more efficient pest and disease control measures.

The package includes 3 principal EU regulations:

- Official Controls Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (OCR): how controls across the agri-food chain will be organised and performed. This regulation has applied to the UK and EU member states since 14 December 2019
- Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 (PHR): controls for protecting plants from disease and pests. This regulation has applied to the UK and EU member states since 14 December 2019
- Animal Health Regulation (EU) 2016/429 (AHR): a framework for the principles of European animal health. This regulation will become applicable to EU member states from the 21 April 2021

1.2 What types of businesses will these changes affect?

The main impacts of the OCR are on the national authorities performing official controls, but also includes new requirements for businesses to assist and cooperate with the staff of the enforcement authorities and the obligation to give access to equipment, premises, computes, etc.

The OCR affects businesses involved in the agri-food chain, particularly those importing goods or animals into the UK and EU. Products covered by the OCR include animals and livestock, animal products, plants, timber and fish catches. We have provided guidance on [GOV.UK](#) and the [UK Plant Health Portal](#).

The PHR affects any business that handles plants, timber and seeds at a commercial scale. It also impacts charities such as botanical gardens who maintain plant collections and share plants with other botanical collections and/or research institutions.

2. Plant Health Regulation General Information

2.1 What does the Plant Health Regulation do?

The new PHR sets out controls and restrictions which apply to imports and internal movement of certain plants, plant pests, and other materials like soil, to help reduce the associated plant health risks.

The SRSF package revises and improves the current EU plant health legislation. This will protect domestic agriculture, horticulture, forestry, parks, gardens and the environment by preventing the entry and spread of harmful plant pests and diseases.

The PHR improves EU plant health legislation and largely repeals [Directive 2000/29](#).

2.2 What has changed under the Plant Health Regulation?

Areas of change include:

- An extended scope and change in the format of plant passports
- New requirements for authorisation to issue plant passports
- More goods imported to the EU now need a phytosanitary certificate
- New requirements for the registration of professional operators
- Movements within the EU - restrictions between disease free and pest free areas
- A strengthened protected zone
- New requirements applying to high risk plants and regulated non quarantine pests (RNQPs)
- A more precautionary approach to new trade flows and a commitment to undertake thorough pest risk assessments
- A new category of priority pests, including annual surveying requirements and outbreak contingency planning

2.3 Does the Plant Health Regulation apply to the UK and Crown Dependencies?

Both the PHR and the plant health elements of the OCR became applicable across the UK and the Crown Dependencies from 14 December 2019. Defra has been working closely with colleagues from the Devolved Administrations and Crown Dependencies throughout the legislation negotiations to make sure the new rules are fit for purpose and to ensure there is alignment in implementing the new requirements.

2.4 What is a Plant Passport (PP)?

A Plant Passport (PP) is an official label for the movement of regulated plants and plant products within the EU, and where applicable, into and within EU Protected Zones (PZs). It demonstrates compliance with all plant health requirements for the relevant plant or plant product.

2.5 What is the purpose of a Plant Passport (PP)?

PPs ensure that plants and plant products are traced throughout the supply chain and declares compliance with plant health requirements such as freedom from pests, which is essential for maintaining biosecurity.

The PP regulations apply across the EU, which means stakeholders in all EU states must uphold the same minimum standards for plant health. This includes using the same format for PP labels. Further information on labelling can be found on the [Plant Health Portal](#).

2.6 When did these regulations apply from?

The new Plant Health Regulations and Official Controls Regulations applied from 14 December 2019.

2.7 What is the difference between a Plant Passport and a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC)?

A Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) is a certificate meeting agreed international standards used for plant biosecurity purposes, and is necessary for most plants and plant products, including wood, wood products and isolated bark, being imported into the UK from third countries or exported from the UK to third countries. It is issued by the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of the country of export.

A PP is for internal movement within the EU alone, and is an EU specific label which both provides an attestation that the plant or wood products in question comply with EU plant

health regulations and ensures their traceability when they are moved within the EU. It is issued by the authorised operator.

The list of plant and wood products that require a PP is different from the list of those that require a PC. Further information on PCs and PPs can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

2.8 What is a Protected Zone?

Some plants and plant products must have a passport to enter parts of EU countries called 'protected zones'. A 'Protected Zone' (PZ) is an area designated as free from a particular quarantine pest(s). The PZ plant passport states that the plant or plant product in question is free from the relevant PZ quarantine pest.

2.9 Who are the competent authorities?

The competent authorities are:

- England & Wales - Animal & Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Scotland - Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)
- Northern Ireland - Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA)

For the forestry sector the competent authorities are

- England, Scotland & Wales - Forestry Commission
- Northern Ireland - DAERA

2.10 Where is further information on PPs?

Details of new PP requirements, including the lists of plants that will need a passport, are currently available [here](#).

Further information can be found on [GOV.uk](https://www.gov.uk), and an introductory pack on plant passports is on our [Plant Health Portal](#).

Information is currently available on the plant health portal here: <https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/smarter-rules-for-safer-food-srsf/>.

2.11 What are the penalties if businesses don't conform to these regulations?

The new plant passport requirements, covering an extended range of plant species, became applicable on 14 December 2019 and applied to all affected businesses from that date. We acknowledge the challenges that industry are facing, and are working to ensure our policies are pragmatic whilst maintaining high levels of biosecurity. To enforce the regulations we will review non compliances on a case-by-case basis, and take appropriate action as necessary.

2.12 Why are all plants passported?

The new PHR, including the widened scope of PPs, is allowing us to take a more proactive approach to plant health, instead of a reactive approach. Therefore in the future we will be able to tackle pest threats to industry and the environment as they emerge.

As the UK has more Protected Zones (PZs) than any other EU Member State, operators throughout the EU must provide a greater level of assurance before issuing a PZ PP for plants and plants products that require a PP.

We also continue to monitor for pests and diseases by continuing to stop pests and diseases before they arrive through international surveillance to spot new risks, taking action at the border with stringent biosecurity checks on plant imports, and by having robust contingency

plans to tackle the pests and diseases. The Government will continue to pursue policies that make the UK the best place in the world to do business and dramatically improve our economy.

3. Plant health definitions

3.1 What does 'Plants for planting' mean?

This means plants intended to remain planted, to be planted or to be replanted.

This includes potted plants such as orchids and poinsettia.

3.2 What does a 'Professional operator' mean?

This means any person, governed by public or private law, involved professionally in, and legally responsible for, one or more of the following activities concerning plants, plant products and other objects:

- (a) planting;
- (b) breeding;
- (c) production, including growing, multiplying and maintaining;
- (d) introduction into, and movement within and out of, the Union territory;
- (e) making available on the market;
- (f) storage, collection, dispatching and processing.

3.3 What does a 'Registered operator' mean?

This means a professional operator registered with the appropriate competent authority.

3.4 What does an 'Authorised operator' mean?

This means a registered operator authorised by the competent authority to issue plant passports, to apply a mark the mark of wood packaging material, or to issue any other official phytosanitary attestation.

3.5 What does 'Final user' mean?

This means any person acting for purposes which are outside that person's trade, business or profession who acquires plants or plant products for personal use.

3.6 What does 'Traceability code' mean?

This means a letter, numerical or alphanumerical code that identifies a consignment, lot or trade unit, used for traceability purposes, including codes referring to a lot, batch, series, date of production or professional operator documents.

4. Plant Passports

4.1 I trade in lots of products, how do I know which ones require a Plant Passport (PP)?

The **complete** lists of plants and plant products which require a PP are in Annexes XIII and, for Protected Zones, in Annex XIV [here](#).

We are currently looking at what changes and challenges may arise in the UK with the introduction of the new regulations and the impact on plant passport and import/export regimes. Information on these changes is available at [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk). We will continue to work with industry to help them understand the requirements. Information is currently available on the plant health portal here: <https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/smarter-rules-for-safer-food-srsf/>

All plants for planting and some seeds and plant products require a PP under the new Regulations. The complete list is linked to above.

4.2 Will a Plant Passport be required down to the final user? For example, if I sell plants to members of the public for their personal use, e.g. to plant in their own gardens, do I need to be authorised to issue them a Plant Passport?

In general you do not need to issue a PP to members of the public for their own personal use. Exceptions to this rule include if you are selling via distance contract e.g. selling via mail order or internet sales, or if you are supplying certain genera/species of plants within a Protected Zone. The list of plants which require a passport to final users in Protected Zones is under discussion between the Commission and Member States and we will provide further guidance when that is finalised.

4.3 Do I need a Plant Passport for moving plants and plant products from one of my premises to another?

Yes, if you move regulated material between your own premises that are more than 10 miles apart. For journeys of over 10 miles you need to provide a PP to maintain traceability of that material.

If you are moving plant or plant products between the premises of the same registered operator within close proximity you are exempt from the requirement for a plant passport. Close proximity is defined as a radius of 10 miles.

4.4 If I am travelling to an exhibition or show, do I need to provide a Plant Passport for that movement?

If you are a professional operator supplying another professional operator a plant or plant product destined for a show or exhibition, you must supply them with a plant passport as you would in any other circumstance. The operator showing or exhibiting the plant would not need to passport the movement from their premises to the show/ exhibition itself.

However if the regulated plant is delivered by the supplier to the operator showing it, to the event itself, then a passport must be provided for that movement.

Furthermore if you are selling to other professional operators at the show or exhibition you must provide a PP for those sales as you would for any other sale between professional operators.

4.5 Do rose growers need a plant passport?

Under the new regulation, all plants for planting (plants that may be planted, replanted or remain planted) require plant passports under the new regulations. If you trade in rose plants, a plant passport is required. However, if you only trade in cut roses, a plant passport is not required.

If you trade in rose plants you will need to provide a plant passport if you supply them to any other professional operator, including retailers.

If you are only trading in roses, and not any other species, a single plant passport can be attached to each trade unit, e.g. box or trolley, which the pot roses would be travelling on. If you supply direct to retail, e.g. a supermarket or a garden centre, a PP could cover a trolley with roses and other species on it, as long as traceability can be provided for all the plants on this trolley, and the composition of plants on the trolley is not modified between the PP being issued and it reaching the retail destination.

4.6 Does 'plants for planting' include turf or potted herbs?

Yes

4.7. Does 'plants for planting' include aquatic plants?

Yes, they are still considered plants for planting.

4.8 Do all herbs, including salad cress, require a plant passport?

We recognise that certain commodities only intended for consumption and kept in a chilled state represent a low plant health risk. Examples would be salad cress sold as a living mat in a punnet, sprouted bean shoots and herbs that have been grown, then washed free of growing medium and packaged for consumption. In this case a plant passport would not be required.

Plants such as herbs, sold as young plants in a growing medium, where the intention is to maintain the plants in active growth in order to produce the maximum 'harvest' of edible leaves, would require a plant passport when supplied to retailers. In this case the intention is to maintain active growth for a period of time and therefore these are considered plants for planting

4.9 What seeds need a plant passport?

The seed species that require a plant passport can be found [here on GOV.uk](#). Seed which may require a PP for a PZ can be found [here](#).

The new rules also apply to seed which may travel in small packets, and which require a plant passport and suppliers label. We are still finalising policy on the labelling requirements in such circumstances. Further guidance is available on the [Plant Health Portal](#).

4.10 If gifting plants to charity, would they need to have a passport label generated?

If you are a professional operator gifting the plant, a plant passport should be provided to the charity as they are a professional operator. They should also record for each plant passport they receive, who supplied them with that plant passport. That information should be stored by them for at least 3 years, and could be held physically or digitally.

In the case of gifts made by amateurs, please see point 6.16 below.

All plants for planting and some seeds and plant products require a PP under the new Regulations. The **complete** lists of plants and plant products which require a PP can be found on [GOV.uk](#), and for Protected Zones, on [GOV.uk](#) here.

The definition of 'plant for planting' is a plant which may remain planted, be planted or be replanted. This includes potted plants such as orchids and poinsettia.

4.11 I renovate gardens for tenants on behalf of a client. Would we only need to add the passport number to the invoice? Would the client need to apply separately as well?

It depends on the gardens you are renovating. In general, you will not need to issue a plant passport right down to the final user buying for their own private garden e.g. members of the public for their own personal use. Exceptions to this rule include if you are selling via distance contract e.g. via mail order or internet sales, or if you are supplying certain genera/species of plants within a Protected Zone. The list of plants which will require a passport to final users in Protected Zones is under discussion between the Commission and Member States and further guidance will be provided when the list is finalised. Supplying gardens of private tenants on behalf of a private landlord would not fall under plant passporting.

If the gardens you are renovating are run by a professional operator, e.g. a botanical garden or local council, you will need to provide plant passports to them. However as they are the final stage in the supply chain, a single plant passport could cover all the plants in a single movement. That professional operator would then need to record that you supplied them with a passport for those plants. A standard plant passport should be provided as you would use for any other commodity, not just a 'passport number'.

For any plant passports you do issue you must keep records of them and who you supplied them to for three years (this storage can be physical or digital). Furthermore, for each passport you receive you must be able to identify who supplied you with each plant passport.

4.12 When a plant arrives from a nursery, if it is going straight into the ground, would the passport need to be changed?

You will need to record who supplied you with each passport you receive and it must be stored for 3 years. It does not necessarily have to be added to any bills processed.

If you then move on the plant in question and it fulfils all the below criteria, you do not need to be authorised to issue your own plant passport as it can move on under its existing passport:

- It is not split down into new units and sent to different locations
- The characteristics of the plants do not change, i.e. you do not grow them on or re-pot them
- The plants remain pest and disease free
- The traceability for the plants or plant products is maintained

If it does not meet these criteria, you will need to issue your own new passports and be authorised to do so.

For example, if you grow the plants on you will need to issue a new plant passport when they are moved again (unless they are moved to another of your own premises that is within 10 miles of the premises where you are moving them from).

Plants are 'grown-on' if they have been any of the following:

- potted, re-potted, grafted or rooted
- in active growth under protection for at least 2 weeks
- in active growth outside for at least 4 weeks
- subject to high risk of infestation by a quarantine organism, for example grown-on a premises subject to statutory notice (legal notice regarding non-compliance or pest outbreak)

4.13 Will PPs be needed down to individual consumers?

Only if you are selling through means of distance contracts, for example selling online, in magazines, or over the phone, or if the plant in question is on a list of plants with PZ status

and which will require a PP provided to the final user. This list is under discussion between the European Commission and Member States. We will provide further guidance soon.

Otherwise as long as that consumer is not using the plants in question for professional purposes and is only purchasing them for personal use, a PP is not required to individual consumers.

4.14 If a regulated plant or plant product in the supply chain is at some point destined for a final user who is acquiring plants or plant products for personal use, do I need to passport that plant or plant product.

Yes. Plants and plant products destined for the final user still need to be passported.

It is **only** the final stage of the supply chain, where the regulated plant or plant product is sold to the final user who is acquiring them for personal use, where a PP is not usually required.

If you are supplying another business you will have to provide PPs even if those plants are destined for a final user who will acquire them for personal use.

5. Attaching Plant Passports

5.1 What do I attach a Plant Passport to?

The PP must be attached to the smallest tradeable unit at the marketing stage concerned. What is most important is that for the units you passport, you maintain traceability for all of the commodities within that unit.

For example if you move the same commodity, from the same origin and from the same similar (homogenous) lot on a unit such as pallets, trolleys, trays, or in bags, then a single PP can be attached to that unit e.g. the pallet, trolley, tray or bag.

If however you sell multiple commodities on the same unit e.g. pallets or trolleys then that the PP must then be attached as either:

- A separate PP on each commodity on that pallet, trolley etc., for example if you have a trolley with many trays on it, and a different species on each tray, the passport should be attached to the tray, rather than the whole trolley.
- Where the unit is going direct to retail without any modification before it reaches the retailer, a single PP can be attached to that unit, e.g. a pallet or trolley, and that PP can cover all the plants and plant products in that unit.
- Furthermore if you supply landscapers or gardeners, e.g. as a cash and carry business, who only supply private gardens, then you only need to supply them with a single PP to cover all the goods they purchase. This is because, like a trolley going direct to retail, this would be the final stage in the supply chain before the final user.

In many cases passports on every pot would not be necessary, as these would generally sold to final users. A final user is a person who is acquiring plants for **personal use** and for purposes which are outside that person's trade, business or profession. However, businesses may passport every individual pot if they wish to.

Regarding mixed consignments, where there is multiple species in a single unit, multiple species can be listed on a single plant passport, e.g. hanging baskets.

Guidance for operators can be found [here](#).

5.2 Do I need to passport every single plant?

Not necessarily.

The passport must be attached to the smallest trade unit at the applicable stage on the supply chain. Therefore if you have multiple plants of the same commodity on a pallet, in bundles, boxes, bags or multiple pots in a tray, the passport can be attached to that pallet, bundle, bag or tray.

If you are selling individual plants to another professional operator, for example a single tree to a landscaper, then that single plant would require a plant passport.

However in most cases passports are not required to be attached to each pot. For example if you supply boxes of plants with multiple species in to a retailer, the passport can be attached to that box.

You can if you choose to, place passports on every individual pot.

5.3 Can a plant passport go on a trolley?

A plant passport can go on a single trolley at any point in the supply chain if the plant or plant products are homogenous and meet all of the following criteria:

1. From the same supplier;
2. Of the same species or combination of species (e.g. if there are pots with the same plant species in them);
3. In the same format;
4. Going to the same place; and
5. Be contained & be sold as that unit

A single Plant Passport could be attached to that unit to provide assurance and traceability.

It should be noted that multiple plant species can go on a single PP, for example if there are multiple species in a single pot or hanging basket.

If the plants or plant products on each shelf of a trolley meet the above 5 criteria, then a single PP can cover a single shelf of the trolley.

5.4 What about trolleys with many species on them?

A PP can be attached to a trolley of a mix of species, even when those species are in separate pots or other units (e.g. trays or boxes), only if that trolley is going directly to retail. In such cases the PP must be attached to the trolley, and not travel in the cab with the delivery driver.

5.5 Can I attach the Plant Passport to a grower's pot, which goes inside a ceramic or decorative pot?

Yes. The PP must be visible and attachment to the grower's pot will be considered compliant as the PP can still be easily found.

5.6 What if I make hanging baskets, do I have to put all the plants on the passport?

Yes. All the botanical names should be listed on the Plant Passport.

5.7 What are my obligations regarding traceability?

If you are issuing a plant passport then you must record:

- (a) where applicable, the professional operator who supplied the trade unit concerned;
- (b) the professional operator to whom the trade unit concerned was supplied; and

(c) relevant information relating to the plant passport.

If you are supplying a plant passport that you did not issue then you must keep your own record of who you supplied it to and who you received it from.

If you receive a plant passport you must know for each passported unit that you receive, the professional operator who supplied you with that unit.

This applies to the entire supply chain, therefore retailers, even if they do not issue plant passports, will need to be registered with the competent authority and keep a record allowing them to identify, for each trade unit of plant, plant product or other object supplied, the professional operators who supplied it.

How you record the PP is your decision, they can be kept physically or digitally. Furthermore it is information within the passport that must be recorded, the information you record does not have to be facsimile of the PP.

All such records must be kept for 3 years and be available to competent authorities as maybe requested.

5.8. Can I attach more than one PP to each unit?

There should be a single PP for each unit, with all the plant species listed on that PP.

5.9 Why do I have to attach a passport if I am selling online?

Under the new regulations anyone selling through distance contract (this includes but is not limited to selling online, over the phone or through mail order) will have to provide a PP down to the final user, even if that final user is buying for personal use.

This is part of the PHR's aim to take a more proactive approach to plant health rather than a reactive approach, as sales through distance contracts account for an increasing proportion of trade in plants and plant products.

As operators authorised to issue PPs must meet a minimum standard of plant health in order to issue PPs and trade, this means that all retailers selling online or through other forms of distance contract must meet plant health requirements. This will help in protecting the entire supply chain and the environment from plant pests and diseases in the future.

5.10 Why do I have to attach labels to units, why can't I attach them to an invoice or delivery advice note (DAN)? What is the biosecurity value?

The attachment of PPs to the trade units themselves (e.g. pots, boxes etc.), rather than invoices or DANs, is to ensure better traceability of plants and plant products in the case of a pest outbreak, especially if a passport is attached to each pot or care label so that information is available immediately in the case of an infected plant.

PPs must be recorded by anyone issuing a PP. Anyone who receives a PP must be able to trace for each passported unit they received, who supplied them with that unit. If you sent a passported unit to another professional operator you would have to be able to record for each unit you supplied, whop you supplied it to.

PPs may also be recorded on invoices or DANs in addition to being attached to the relevant trade unit.

5.11 I am supplied with a plant by a different professional operator which I then give back, no money is involved, do I need a plant passport?

Yes, the PP system is concerned with movement not marketing, as movement of plants represents a biosecurity risk. A single PP can be provided for both movements involved, (i.e. to the borrower and then back to the lender), as long as the consignment meets the below requirements:

- You do not split the consignment
- Traceability for the plants or plant products is maintained
- The plants, plant products or other objects concerned continue to comply with requirements regarding the presence of pests and disease
- The characteristics of the plants, plant products or other objects concerned have not changed

6. Registration and Authorisation to issue Plant Passports

6.1 Do I need to become authorised in order to issue PPs?

Yes, you must become authorised to issue PPs.

6.2 How do I become authorised to issue PPs?

In order to become authorised to issue PPs you must apply for authorisation from APHA.

For further details visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-passports-application>,

Complete both the Application and Authorisation forms and email to plantpassportregistration@apha.gov.uk

Your application for registration and authorisation to issue plant passports will be processed and confirmation of registration and a letter of authority to issue plant passports will be emailed back to you within 5 working days. Please allow sufficient time to become registered and authorised.

You will then be audited in 2020 to ensure you are compliant with the regulations.

Inspectors will:

- interview you or the person responsible for plant passports at your site
- audit your records
- inspect host plants and if necessary sample them to make sure they're free at that point from pests or diseases that could make trading in the EU a plant health risk
- give you or the person responsible an update on the latest plant quarantine pest and disease risks

Follow up discussion, or possible revisits may also be arranged as felt appropriate.

Annually your authorisation will be reviewed by the competent authority to ensure it is considered appropriate and this includes your ability to authorise to trade plants as being free of regulated organisms.

6.3 If I am already authorised, will I need to become re-authorised?

We are not asking existing authorised operators to re-authorise as we expect they will already meet the requirements stipulated in Article 89(1) of the new PHR. These requirements are:

- Operator knowledge of pest biology, best practice in pest prevention and eradication planning.
- Operator must have systems and procedures in place to fulfil obligations regarding traceability of consignments.

We will be auditing already authorised operators along with all the newly authorised operators. You will be contacted in the near future.

6.4 As we run Horticulture on behalf of a client instructed by them would they need to register?

Both operators would need to be registered. If you are issuing the plant passports you should be authorised to do so.

6.5 Can an old plant passport authorisation be reopened to save another application?

It depends on when you were authorised as it may be that your authorisation is still active. It is advised you ask your local inspector, or enquire through the email below:
plantpassportregistration@apha.gov.uk

6.6 Will my registration number stay the same?

Yes. However there is potential for a registration number to change in the future, any such changes will be done with appropriate notice

6.7 When do I need to be registered to be authorised to issue PPs?

You only need to be registered and authorised as a professional operator from the date that you need to commence issuing plant passports. Please allow at least 2 weeks to become registered and authorised. For queries regarding registration and authorisation please email: plantpassportregistration@apha.gov.uk

6.8 What requirements must I meet to become authorised?

To issue PPs a professional operator must be able to demonstrate to the competent authority (such as APHA or the Forestry Commission) that they:

- Have knowledge of pest biology, best practice in pest prevention and eradication planning and ways to take these forward if regulated pests are encountered at authorised premises.
- Have trained staff who are responsible for carrying out inspections of plant or wood products that must have a PP when moved within the EU.
- Have systems and procedures in place to fulfil obligations regarding traceability of consignments and to keep appropriate records for 3 years.

This will be assessed as part of the application and authorisation process.

6.9 If I am part of a co-operative, do I need to become authorised, or can the co-operative as a whole become authorised?

The co-operative as a whole can be registered and authorised to issue PPs as a single entity, as long as the co-operative is a legally recognised entity, not an informal arrangement.

6.10 I am a retailer who sells plants, do I need to become authorised to issue plant passports?

If PPs are attached to the appropriate trade units down to the individual stores by your suppliers then you do not need to become authorised to issue your own PPs. For example if you receive plants to individual stores in boxes and the passports are attached to those boxes then you do not need to issue any of your own PPs.

If you split down consignments which are then moved to a different premises, by dividing a trade unit with a passport on it into two or more new units, you need to be authorised to issue new plant passports for those units.

Passports must be provided down to retail stores, not just down to distribution centres.

6.11 Can one plant passport authorisation number cover the whole company and all sites?

A single plant passport authorisation can cover an entire company, the site address would suffice.

If you are a retailer, the head office can be registered and (if applicable) authorised on behalf of all its retail outlets.

6.12 What are the costs of applying for authorisation?

Details on inspection and renewal fees can be found on [GOV.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

6.13 Can I just provide PPs to the distribution centre?

No. PPs must be provided for units travelling down to individual stores. If PPs are attached to the units travelling to stores e.g. they are attached to boxes going to individual stores, then no new PP needs to be issued and the box can travel from the distribution centre to the store with that PP.

If the units are split down, e.g. plants are taken from a trolley and packed into boxes to go to stores, then new PPs would have to be issued for those boxes.

6.14 Where can I find a list of operators authorised to issue PPs?

There is no publicly available list, please contact those in your supply chain to see if they are authorised.

6.15 I am an amateur, do I still need to be registered?

Under the regulations, only those professionally involved in plants need to be registered with the plant health authorities, this does not therefore include amateurs and hobbyists. The definition of who is a 'professional' operator is currently being reviewed to ensure our approach is proportionate to the biosecurity risk involved with the movements of plants.

We are drafting guidance on who is considered an amateur and will release further info soon.'

The term amateur may include a range of very different activities and this is why we are drafting guidance that is common sense and simple, but also applicable to a wide variety of scenarios to cover this complex issue.

6.16 I grow plants in my garden to give to charity. Do I need to be registered to issue plant passports?

Regarding hobbyists who donate plants grown in their private gardens to charities or other similar organisations, these donors are not considered as ‘operators professionally involved in plants and plant products’, and would not therefore fall within the scope of the plant passport regime. To this extent, such donors would not need to be registered and plant passports would not therefore be required for these movements.

6.17 I am a distance seller. Do I need to be registered and authorised to issue PPs?

Distance sellers only need to be registered and authorised to issue PPs if they are professional operators, amateurs and hobbyists do not need to be registered or authorised.

We are drafting guidance on who is considered an amateur and will release further info soon.

The term amateur may include a range of very different activities and this is why we are drafting guidance that is common sense and simple, but also applicable to a wide variety of scenarios to cover this complex issue

7. Content and format of Plant Passports

7.1 What must the PP contain? What should it look like?

The content and format of the new PP can be viewed [here](#). Examples of models for PPs are in the Annex.

An introductory guide to Plant Passports can be found on the Plant Health Portal [here](#).

The size of the PPs, the use of a border line, the proportions and the size of their elements, and the fonts used in the models are [examples only](#).

The PP must be information and content must be distinct and separate from other information on any label. The new format has been adopted to ensure better consistency and recognisability across the European Union, and to provide all the information required for a consignment to be traced through the supply chain for biosecurity purposes.

More guidance regarding PP content and format is available on [GOV.UK](#). Information is already available on the [Plant Health Portal](#).

The words ‘Plant Passport’ must be present in English (and be in the top right hand corner while the EU flag must be in the top left hand corner), but may also be accompanied by another official language of the Union. If ‘Plant Passport’ is added in a second language it must be separated from the English with a slash.

7.2 Where does the Protected Zone (PZ) code go?

The PZ code should go on the PP, below the words ‘Plant Passport’, as demonstrated in the example formats which can be found [here](#).

The latest PZ pest codes can be found [here](#) in Annex III.

7.3 Can I use the new Plant Passport format now?

Yes, as long as the information within the PP conforms to current regulations.

7.4 Will PPs issued before 14 Dec remain valid?

Plant passports issued under the old regulations (The Plant Health Directive 2000/29) before 14 December 2019 will remain valid until 14 December 2023.

7.5 If the plant's botanical name is elsewhere on the consignment, do I need to put it on the PP?

Yes, the botanical name must be included on the PP.

The full botanical name, including genus and species should be used, with variety name being optional. If the species name is not known, a genus name alone would be acceptable.

7.6 What traceability code can I use?

The traceability code of the plant, plant product (or wood and/or wood product) or the other object concerned can be an existing code used to trace a consignment. It must provide traceability for all the regulated commodities within the relevant trade unit back to the authorised operator that issued the PP with that traceability code, for example a batch number.

7.7 In what cases is a traceability code not needed?

Plants and plant products which are prepared in such a way that they are ready for the sale to final users without any further preparation and present no risk concerning the spread of Union quarantine pests do not need a traceability code.

However the European Commission is drafting a list of plants and plant products which will require a traceability code in all cases, we will release further guidance when that list is finalised.

7.8 When does the 'Country of Origin' change?

We will maintain the current guidance on country of origin and when it changes. However this may be reviewed for certain plant products to take into account emerging pest threats.

If a plant has been 'grown on' in the UK then its country of origin may be considered to be the UK.

Nurseries must consider their plants to have been grown on if they have been:

- i) Potted, re-potted, grafted or rooted or
- ii) In active growth under protection for at least two weeks, or
- iii) In active growth outside for at least four weeks, or
- iv) Subject to high risk of infestation by a quarantine organism (e.g. grown on a premises subject to statutory Notice).

7.9 What flag do I put on the PP?

We continue to use the EU PP system and therefore use the new format of PPs. This requires the EU flag to be present in the top left hand corner of the PP

7.10 Can there be multiple species on a single PP?

Yes, as long as the plants, plant products or other objects listed are large enough in font to be legible.

In the case of plants and plant products:

- The botanical name(s) of the plant(s) species or taxon(s) concerned should be used, and
- Optionally, the name of the variety

7.11 What is the country code for the UK?

The correct country code for the UK, including Northern Ireland, is GB.

7.12 Can I produce or use a PP template and then write in the details by hand?

Yes, but if you handwrite details in a plant passport they must be in capitals and be legible. They must also be written in so they will not be washed off or changed.

7.13 Why have the PZ codes changed from the annex codes to EPPO codes or scientific names?

The annex codes for protected zone pests and diseases may change in future as legislation is updated. The EPPO codes and scientific names are less likely to change, therefore longer term these options should maintain more consistency for the trade.

8. Requirements for issuing of PPs

8.1 How often do I require inspections?

The regulations require inspection at least once per year however, certain plant or wood products may require more than this. Certain plant or wood products may also require inspections at defined times of the year, such as during the growing season. Further information will be provided in due course.

8.2 Will there still be an exception for plants supplied directly to retail?

No. Under the new regulations there will be no exception for plants supplied directly to retail.

This means that plants previously exempt under the current regulations will now need to meet the substantive requirements so that plant passports can be issued to retailers.

8.3 What is an RNQP and why do I have to meet requirements for it?

An RNQP is a Regulated Non-Quarantine Pest, and is a category of pest for which there are maximum thresholds regarding the presence of that pest on a consignment. These pests are regulated as they are considered to have an unacceptable economic impact.

The details of RNQPs are available [here](#) in Annex IV and V.

A further update regarding the RNQPs will be made available in due course.

8.4 How long must I store a PP for?

You must keep a record of PPs you have issued for at least three years.

8.5 Can I store the PP digitally?

Yes. You can store it physically or digitally.

8.6 When do I need to re-issue a PP?

When a commodity is split down, for example from a pallet of regulated material, to multiple bundles, then a PP will have to be re-issued for the new, smaller trade unit(s) (in this case the bundles).

The PP must also be replaced, a meticulous examination of the product(s) carried out, and a new PP issued if the plants or plant products in question no longer fulfil all of the following:

1. Traceability requirements, i.e. the supplier of the plant or plant products is recorded
2. Substantive requirements, i.e. they meet the requirements for a PP to be issued around freedom from pest and disease,
3. The characteristics of the plants or plant products have not changed.

If you have replaced a PP, you must keep a record of the original, replaced PP for a minimum of three years for traceability purposes

9. Non-compliance

9.1 I am trying to become compliant under the new regulations but am still unsure if I am meeting requirements, am I going to be penalised?

There will be no exemption from the requirement to passport movements of regulated plants and plant products from 14 December 2019. We acknowledge the challenges that industry are facing, and are working to ensure our policies are pragmatic whilst maintaining high levels of biosecurity. We will continue to take a stepped approach to non-compliance and aid businesses in becoming compliant with Plant Health Regulations.

10. Phytosanitary certificates for plants and plant products

10.1 What is a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC)?

A PC is a certificate used to confirm that consignments meet the phytosanitary requirements of the importing country. The PC certifies that the material has been inspected where necessary, is considered free from quarantine (and other) pests and that it conforms to the relevant plant health regulations.

10.2 Who can issue a PC?

A PC can only be issued by an authorised officer of the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of the exporting country. In England and Wales this is APHA on behalf of Defra.

10.3 In what circumstances is an import PC required?

A PC is required for regulated plants and plant products being imported into the EU/UK from third countries.

10.4 What goods must be accompanied by a PC for import into the UK from 14 December 2019?

All plants and living parts of plants, including all seeds intended for planting, will need to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate to enter into the UK and EU from 14 December 2019, unless they are listed in [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2019](#) as exempted 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 (*Musa* spp.)
- dates

10.5 Do I need a PC for processed commodities?

No. The UK's interpretation and application of the EU's third country import controls is that phytosanitary certificates should not be required for plant products, such as fruit and vegetables, which have been processed and packaged. This includes items like packaged salads and frozen material. Composite products like nut and seed butters containing processed fruit or vegetables do not fall within plant health import controls or require a phytosanitary certificate.

10.6 Do I need a PC to move goods within the EU or UK?

A PC is only required for the import of regulated goods into the EU/UK from third countries. For internal movements within the EU, a plant passport may be required. For more information on plant passport requirements, visit the plant health portal [here](#).

10.7 What should I do with the original PC?

You need to provide the competent authority (as defined in Question 2.8) with the original PC within three days of your goods clearing customs. The requirement for the original PC to be submitted within three days of the consignment landing is in line with current standards for phytosanitary certification and exists to ensure that the PC can be recorded and checked appropriately. The original PC is audited against the electronic copy to ensure there are no discrepancies, and retained by the competent authority.

10.8 What IT systems do I need to use for the import of plants during the transition period?

There will be no change to current IT systems and processes to import plants and plant products from non-EU countries. The UK continues to use the domestic system, PEACH, for the pre-notification and control of regulated plants and plant products. Operators will not be required to use TRACES-NT for plant health control purposes for the foreseeable future. For transshipments, different procedures will apply, please contact the APHA Imports Helpdesk on 0300 100 0313 or email: Apha_srsfmailbox@apha.gov.uk.

10.9 Does pre-notification of regulated plants and plant products change?

Not all commodities that require a PC have to be pre-notified on the PEACH system.

The list of commodities which require pre-notification has increased from 16 January 2020. These include sweet potato, sugar beet, ginger and carrots, and are listed in Annex XI Part A of [Implementing Regulation 2019/2072](#).

10.10 Many products are traded on wooden pallets. Are traders in goods not covered by the SRSF regulations, but using wooden pallets, affected by the new rules?

Wood packaging material (WPM) is covered under the new regulations. The UK is developing a WPM monitoring programme, and operators may in future be required to pre-notify certain WPM consignments which may be subject to risk based plant health controls. Further guidance will be made available on gov.uk to ensure operators are fully aware of any new requirements. Wooden pallets do not require a phytosanitary certificate for import to the UK.

11.. High risk plants

11.1 When did these 'high risk' plants and plant products become prohibited?

The 'high risk' prohibition applied to third country imports to the UK and EU from 14 December 2019. The list of high risk plants has been published on gov.uk [here](#).

11.2 Does the prohibition apply in the UK and all EU Member States?

Yes, the prohibition on 'high risk' plants and plant product imports from third countries applied to the UK and all EU Member States from the 14 December 2019.

11.3 What is the legal basis for these new 'high risk' plants?

Article 42 of the new Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 introduces the restrictions on third country import of plants, plant products and other objects that are considered high risk, until a risk assessment has been completed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). The general criteria that high risk plants are assessed against by EFSA is provided for in Annex III of the Plant Health Regulation. The Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2019 sets out the list of plants which are classified as high risk.

More detailed information on the risk assessment process carried out by EFSA and the supporting information required is contained in the [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2018](#). EFSA have also published a technical report that lays out the information and format required for a technical dossier: Information required for dossiers to support demands for import of high risk plants, plant products and other objects as foreseen in Article 42 of Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

11.4 Can I export 'high risk' plants from the UK to a country in the EU?

The high risk plant prohibition only applies to plants being imported into the EU from third countries. This prohibition does not apply to plants and plant products being moved between EU Member States. However, some plants and products require a plant passport for intra-EU movement. Please check the relevant plant passport guidance, or contact your local APHA/FC inspector for more information.

11.5 When can I submit a dossier?

A dossier from the third country National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) meeting the requirements of the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2018, can be submitted to the Commission at any point.

11.6 Have any dossiers been submitted to the Commission already?

Yes, although the EU Member States are not formally notified when a technical dossier is submitted to the Commission for a risk assessment. If an assessment permits the trade, the

EU legislation will be updated to remove the plant or plant product from the 'high risk' listing. Please contact the NPPO of the third country you are considering importing goods from for more information about whether an application has been made.

11.7 Can I provide any information to prove that this trade does not pose a pest risk to the UK?

The NPPO of the relevant third country may apply for an exemption from the 'high risk' prohibition if they consider the pest risk of the trade to be low. They must supply specific information to the Commission. EFSA will then complete a full risk assessment to review the status of the plant or plant product.

11.8 My NPPO has submitted a technical dossier for a full risk assessment. How long will it take for an exemption to be granted?

An exemption is dependent upon the results of a full risk assessment and is not guaranteed. The assessment will be conducted by the Commission within a reasonable timeframe, but we are unable to comment on precise timings.

11.9 I am a business owner trading in plants and plant products, can I apply for an exemption?

No, only the NPPO of the third country concerned may submit an application to request exemption from the 'high risk' list. The procedure that NPPOs must follow to be granted an exemption is set out in the [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2018](#).

12.0 High risk plant listing

12.1 Who decided which plants would be listed as high risk?

The list of high risk plants has been developed by plant health experts at EU Commission working groups since 2017. The UK was present in these working groups and voted in favour of the current list. The new high risk status of plants on the list will allow us to improve our high standards of biosecurity in the UK.

12.2 Is there a way to find out why a specific plant is on this high risk list and what EFSA is looking for in order to change the listing?

We cannot comment on specific plants, however the general criteria that high risk products are assessed against by EFSA is provided for in Annex III of the Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031.

12.3 Does the 'high risk' list include any seeds?

Yes. The seeds and tubers of *Ullucus tuberosus* will be prohibited from third country import after 14 December 2019.

12.4 Is it possible to offer a compromise, where high risk plants are only sent to registered nurseries and the plants are inspected and tested by plant authorities in each Member State?

No. The regulation is clear in that any plant, plant product or other object listed in the [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2019](#) as high risk is prohibited from entering the Union until a risk assessment has been completed. The risk assessment process and information on the evidence required to support the risk assessment can be found in the [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2018](#).

12.5 Many of the diseases and pests that EFSA are testing for have not been officially recorded in my country, so why is this restriction in place?

Plants and plant products that have been listed as high risk are prohibited from entering the Union until a risk assessment has been completed. [Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2018/2018](#) gives more information on the risk assessment process carried out by EFSA.

Rigorous pest surveillance (including sampling and testing where relevant), a good inspection regime and pest management practices are all examples of measures that can be taken to demonstrate confidence in the likelihood of a pest being absent. The responsibility of assuring pest freedom rests in part with those trading in plant commodities.

12.6 How is grain impacted by Plant Health Regulations?

Only certain genera of grain from specific third countries require a PC and pre-notification to the competent authority. However, if the grain has undergone processing that removes the plant health risk then it will not require a PC. All other grains from other countries do not require a PC or pre-notification

12.7 What seeds require a phytosanitary certificate?

All plants, including all seed and propagating material, imported from a third country now require a phytosanitary certificate. This includes seed species captured by marketing requirements and imported from a third country with a recognised third country equivalence decision and for which there are new plant health regulated non-quarantine products RNQP requirements.

12.8 Does algae or seaweed require a PC under the new SRSF regulations?

Algae or seaweed imported to the EU from third countries for aquaculture use is considered a plant under the definition outlined in Article 2(1) of the Plant Health Regulation 2016/2031. Therefore, it would need to be accompanied by a PC. If the algae/seaweed is dried and packaged for human consumption, then based on the UK's interpretation of the new regulations it would be considered a processed product and so would not require a PC.

13.0 OCR & OCR changes for Plants

More information on OCR can be found on the factsheet and OCR Q&A on the [Plant Health Portal](#).

13.1 What has changed under the Official Controls Regulation?

Whilst the majority of the OCR rules are for enforcement authorities, the OCR has also impacted on businesses involved in the agri-food chain; in particular those importing products of animal origin, animals and animal by-products, plants, plant products, food and feed.

Changes have occurred in the following areas:

- Border Control Posts
- Pre-Notification deadline
- Common Health Entry Document
- New pre-notification IT system

13.2 What does IMSOC mean for plant good imports from third countries?

IMSOC is being used across the EU, working in conjunction with TRACES-NT to exchange information in relation to plant health controls.

There will be no change to current IT systems and processes to import plants and plant products from non-EU countries. The UK will continue to use the domestic system, PEACH, for the pre-notification and control of regulated plants and plant products. For transshipments, different procedures will apply, please contact the APHA Imports Helpdesk on 0300 100 0313 or email: Apha_srsfmailbox@apha.gov.uk.

13.3 Do I need to register for IMSOC to import plant goods into the UK?

No. If you wish to import third country plant goods into the UK, you will need to be registered on PEACH. The UK continues to use the domestic system, PEACH, for the pre-notification of imports of regulated plants and plant products. Information on how to register on PEACH, including what information you need to provide, is available [here](#).

An interface between PEACH and IMSOC is in development.

13.4 What is a CHED-PP?

A CHED-PP is a Common Health Entry Document for Plants, Plant products and plant propagating material.

Plant consignments entering the EU from third countries through designated border control posts need to be accompanied by a CHED-PP. This document has been introduced by the EU to improve traceability of the consignment to:

- provide information on the consignment and its final destination
- pre-notify the competent authorities of the consignments arrival
- allow competent authorities to record the outcome of any official controls performed, including any action taken
- used to communicate information through the Information Management System of Official Controls (IMSOC)

The UK will continue to use the current domestic PEACH system to allow operators to pre-notify consignments and to capture the data required to complete a CHED-PP for the import of third country goods into the UK.

An interface is in development between PEACH and IMSOC to automatically transfer information between the systems.

13.5 What is TRACES-NT?

TRACES-NT is a new system that is intended to be used across the EU for third country plant imports from 14 December 2019 and will host the CHED-PPs. It is a component of the IMSOC and was developed to allow the use of electronic certification.

For the pre-notification of imports of third country plant goods from 14 December, the UK will continue to use the domestic system, PEACH. An interface between PEACH and IMSOC is in development.

13.6 For plant third country imports do I need to use a CHED-PP / IMSOC / TRACES-NT ?

No. There has been no changes to current IT systems and processes to import plants and plant products from non-EU countries. The UK will continue to use the domestic system, PEACH, for the pre-notification and control of regulated plants and plant products. Operators will not be required to use TRACES-NT for plant health control for the foreseeable future. . An interface is in development to exchange relevant electronic information between PEACH and TRACES-NT/IMSOC. For transshipments, different procedures will apply, please contact the APHA Imports Helpdesk on 0300 100 0313 or email: Apha_srsfmailbox@apha.gov.uk.

13.7 What if my goods are a transshipment through the UK before travelling on to a destination in an EU MS?

If your consignment is being transhipped through the UK onwards to another EU MS the data must be entered into TRACES-NT using the CHED-PP, for more information on the procedure to follow, please contact the APHA Imports Helpdesk on 0300 100 0313 or email: Apha_srsfmailbox@apha.gov.uk.

13.8 Why is there a 100% frequency of checks for some commodities and only a 1% frequency for others?

The system of checks for plants a plant products is risk based, with those presenting a known risk requiring a high frequency of checks to maintain UK and EU biosecurity by preventing the introduction and spread of harmful plant pests. A much lower frequency of checks has been introduced under the PHR for those commodities for which there is insufficient data to determine the plant health risk. This has been introduced to monitor for potential pest and disease pathways on previously unregulated plant goods, to improve our domestic biosecurity. The 1% frequency is a minimum and may be reviewed in future, once a baseline dataset has been generated to reflect interception and non-compliance trends.

14. PPPs

14.1 What are PPPs?

Plant protection products are 'pesticides' that protect crops or desirable or useful plants. They are primarily used in the agricultural sector but also in forestry, horticulture, amenity areas and in home gardens. They contain at least one active substance and have one of the following functions:

- Protect plants or plant products against pests/diseases, before or after harvest
- influence the life processes of plants (such as substances influencing their growth, excluding nutrients)
- preserve plant products
- destroy or prevent growth of undesired plants or parts of plants
- They may also contain other components including safeners and synergists.
- EU countries authorise plant protection products on their territory and ensure compliance with EU rules.

14.2 How does the new Official Controls Regulation 2017/625 (OCR) affect PPPs?

The OCR makes it clear that PPPs are within the scope of the Regulation together with other sectors of the agri-food chain like food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, plant health, etc.

This means that enforcement authorities must follow the OCR rules when performing official controls and other official activities to verify compliance with PPP legislation.

The OCR sets out some general obligations for businesses like for example the obligation to give access to the staff of the enforcement authorities to the equipment, means of transport,

computers, documents, etc. and requires businesses to cooperate with those authorities during controls.