Animal & Plant Health Agency

Plant Passporting Updates No.38: May 2022

Dear plant passporters, in this edition are a number of items on plant health policy, new controls to be aware of, plant passporting changes, pests and diseases and the plant health risk register moving:

- Attaching UK Plant passports in the EU – update
- Strict controls on pine and cedar tree imports into Great Britain implemented
- New Pest Risk Analysis Available for Consultation
- Reporting Oak Processionary Moth in England – caterpillars active now
- Information about Phytophthora pluvialis, including how to report sightings.
- Seasonal pests and diseases on ornamental plants, forest trees and edible crops
- The UK Plant Health Risk Register has moved
- Two blueberry viruses recently added to the UK Plant Health Risk Register – use the information to help you to protect your business

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Attaching UK Plant passports in the EU – update

- UK plant passports can be attached in an EU member state, under certain circumstances (see below), until 30 June 2023. The passport must comply with UK

regulations and will have no legal status if the steps detailed below are not completed at the first place of destination in GB.

- The allowance to attach UK PPs in an EU member state will be extended, with some changes (see below), for a further 12 months and will now end on 30th June 2023.
- The extension only applies to plants that are intended for final users
- Intended for final users: means intended, by evidence from the packaging, labelling or by other means, for sale to final users
- For more details see Attach UK Plant Passports in EU to ensure you have read and comply with all of the detail of the extended scheme as there have been some changes you will need to be familiar with.

Strict controls on pine and cedar tree imports into Great Britain implemented

The new regulation, in the form of a Statutory Instrument, strengthens requirements for the import of pine and cedar trees into Great Britain from Friday 29 April. The bolstered measures only permit imports of these species, both of which are host species of Pine Processionary Moth, from:

- Countries officially confirmed by the National Plant Protection Organisation as free of Pine Processionary Moth;
- Officially designated pest-free areas;
- Nurseries where the trees have been grown under complete physical protection for their lifetime.

The controls apply to all businesses which import living plants and their constituent parts, including live plant foliage and plants for planting, into Great Britain.

For more details see Strict controls on pine and cedar tree imports into Great Britain implemented.

New Pest Risk Analysis Available for

Two new Defra Pest Risk Assessments (PRA) published for review see New Pest Risk Analysis Available for Consultation:

- Phytophthora pluvialis on western hemlock, tanoak, pine (Pinus radiata, Pinus patula and Pinus strobus) and Douglas-fir
- The bacterial disease Pseudomonas avellanae

Report Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) in England – caterpillars active now

The caterpillars of OPM infest oak trees, eating (defoliating) the leaves, weakening the tree and leaving it vulnerable to other threats. OPM nests and caterpillars are also a hazard to human and animal health.

If you own or manage oak trees, you should use this guidance to identify and survey the caterpillars, nests and report any sightings. For more details on OPM, how to report it, what to look for and when, see Managing oak processionary moth in England.

Information about Phytophthora pluvialis, including how to report sightings

Phytophthora pluvialis, is a fungus-like pathogen known to affect a variety of trees including western hemlock, tanoak, pine (Pinus radiata, Pinus patula and Pinus strobus) and Douglas-fir. Phytophthora pluvialis was discovered in a woodland in Cornwall in September 2021, where it was found to be affecting mature western hemlock and Douglas-fir trees. Following extensive surveillance, further outbreaks have been found in Cornwall, Devon, Cumbria, Surrey and at multiple sites in Scotland and Wales.

Symptoms:
Phytophthora pluvialis is known to cause needle cast, shoot dieback, and lesions on the stem, branches, and roots. Read the symptom guide.

What businesses must be aware of:
Please note that official controls have been updated on the Demarcated Areas (DMAs) in place for Phytophthora pluvialis, which those trading the following should be aware of

- Western hemlock (Tsuga)
- Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga)
- Tanoak (Notholithocarpus), and
- pine species (Pinus radiata, Pinus patula and Pinus strobus)

Whilst this is primarily aimed at timber movement and forestry, it also references plants for planting.

- Details of DMAs for Wales (maps and movement restrictions)
- Details of DMAs for England (maps and movement restrictions)

How to report sightings:
Please remain vigilant for signs of Phytophthora pluvialis. If you

think you have spotted signs of this disease anywhere in Great Britain then please tell us using tree-alert.

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, which as professional operators you need to be aware of:

Ornamental plants

- Xylella fastidiosa is a bacterial disease which can kill plants by stopping them taking up water. At present Xylella is NOT known to be present in the UK but it can affect a large range of plants. Xylella has been reported in southern Italy, France including Corsica, Spain including Balearic Islands, as well as several non-EU countries. More detail also on the Xylella fastidiosa factsheet

- Red Palm weevil (Rhynchophorus ferrugineus) infests many species of palm and is present in the EU, but not in the UK. Red Palm weevil can severely attack plants which exhibit a total loss of foliage and rotting of the trunk, eventually resulting in the death of the tree. It has proved to be a devastating pest in many parts of the Mediterranean.

Forest trees

- Larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle (Ips typographus) is considered a serious pest on spruce in Europe and has recently been found in the wider environment in England as part of routine plant health

surveillance activity. The beetle is mainly a secondary pest, preferring stressed or weakened trees. However, under the right environmental conditions, beetle numbers can increase enough to result in attacks on living trees. The beetle prefers stressed or weakened trees e.g. windblown, damaged and recently felled spruce trees, where, under the right environmental conditions, beetle numbers can increase. Inspection of trees in this category should be a priority. The pest has been found in south east England described as demarcated area, which remain unchanged and covers parts of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Surrey, City and County of the City of London, Greater London, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent and Essex within the boundaries shown in the Demarcated Area. If you suspect the presence of the larger eight-toothed European spruce bark beetle report it via tree-alert.

Edible crops

- Epitrix potato flea beetle pose a serious threat to potato production in the UK. Potato tubers, or soil attached to the tubers, could carry the pest (as pupae, adults or possibly larvae) over long distances. The import of potatoes from infested areas in Portugal and Spain provides a potential pathway of introduction to the UK. Epitrix is notifiable, please report any sightings.

- Tomato Brown Rugose Fruit virus (ToBRFV) is transmissible through both sap transfer and contact. The virus is seed transmissible, though it is thought to be limited to the seed coat and does not infect the embryo. The virus can be spread over short distances through plant-to-plant contact or through human mediated spread (plant handling, grafting) on contaminated hands, gloves or clothing. Yield losses of between 25

and 70% have been reported, largely due to the fruit being unmarketable, and the loss of production period as plants reduce in vigour and die prematurely. Additional costs can be incurred through removal of infected crops and cleaning of the glasshouse. ToBRFV is notifiable, report a pest/disease.

The UK Plant Health Risk Register has moved

The UK Plant Health Risk Register has moved. From Tuesday 3rd May, you can find the site at UK Plant Health Risk Register.

What is the UK Plant Health Risk Register?

It is a major step in implementing the recommendations of the independent Task Force on Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity. It is a tool for government, industry and stakeholders to prioritise action against pests and diseases which threaten our crops, trees, gardens and countryside. The Plant Health Risk Register is publicly available.

Pests recently added to, or reviewed on the UK Plant Health Risk Register

- Blueberry red ringspot virus – Virus pest of blueberries present in parts of Europe and elsewhere. No lasting impacts on yield have been recorded. Watching brief on UK status in line with increased awareness raising.
- Blueberry shock virus – Blueberry virus present in North America causing dieback of stems and variable levels of yield loss. Plants may recover fully in subsequent

seasons following infection, and in some cases the cost of replanting can outweigh the economic costs caused by reduced yields. Watching brief on UK status in line with increased awareness raising.

If you have any comments on these entries, please leave them via the feedback box on the bottom of the UK Plant Health Risk Register webpage, and please also ensure you mention the name of the pest you are commenting on as we are not told which page the comment was made from.

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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