

Two-Lined Chestnut Borer and the Oak Longhorn Beetle Q&A

Q. What are the new measures?

Measures will be introduced against the import of plants and other relevant regulated goods of oak, sweet chestnut and *Castanopsis* species; hosts of the Oak Longhorn Beetle and the Two-Lined Chestnut Borer. These measures will apply to specific third countries infested with the specific pest. Imports of these high risk plant goods will only be permitted under certain conditions e.g. the goods being grown in a pest free area, has undergone processing or treated with heat. No changes in import requirements will be made in relation to countries that are known to be free from the pest.

Q. Why are you introducing them?

The presence of these pests in the UK would introduce an additional threat to oak, sweet chestnut and *Castanopsis* trees for the Oak Longhorn Beetle and oak and sweet chestnut for the Two-Lined Chestnut Borer. Oak and sweet chestnut are already under pressure from pest outbreaks such as oak processionary moth and sweet chestnut blight. The tree species impacted by these pests have significant social, environmental and economic benefits in GB, all of which would be compromised by a pest outbreak. We are therefore introducing specific requirements for the import of plants for planting and wood of host plants to enhance the level of protection against the risk of these pests entering GB.

The related legislation will be updated as needed in response to changing risk profiles and will be based on Pest Risk Analyses and decisions will be taken at the UK Plant Health Risk Group. We will engage with stakeholders ahead of any amendment to the regulations.

Q. What evidence do you have to support these measures?

An extensive Pest Risk Analysis has been conducted for each of these pests, followed by a Regulatory Triage Assessment and a stakeholder [consultation](#) to assess the impact of introducing these measures. All analyses demonstrated that the nature of the biosecurity risk posed by these two pests justified additional legislative measures. This position is supported by stakeholders.

The decision to progress with this legislation was taken at the UK Plant Health Risk Group (a decision-making body that has representatives from Defra, Forestry Commission and all Devolved Administrations) with oversight from the UK National Plant Protection Organisation (consisting of the four Chief Plant Health Officers of the UK and senior Forestry Commission officials).

Q. Why are you taking a different approach to the EU?

Pest Risk Analyses, conducted by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO), have recommended both pests for regulation and suggested the approach that GB are introducing. Neither pest is present in the EU and the specific requirements will be targeted at countries where the pests are known to occur.

Q. Are these pests in the UK?

Both pests are not known to be present in GB, but we remain concerned about the possibility of them arriving in GB on imported host plants. The Pest Risk Analysis for each pest, conducted by EPPO, concluded that the GB climate would be suitable for this pest's establishment.

Q. What are the associated risks of each pest?

The Oak Longhorn Beetle is a major pest of oak trees in Northeast China and has been recorded on oak, sweet chestnut and *Castanopsis* trees. This pest is present across East Asia and has caused epidemic outbreaks in several provinces of Northeast China, resulting in ecological and economic losses. The Two-Lined Chestnut Borer is a wood-boring beetle that is a pest of sweet chestnut and oak trees in North America. Widespread outbreaks of this pest have been recorded in its native range of Eastern and Central USA, as well as Canada, resulting in high levels of tree mortality and significant losses to the forestry and horticulture industries. The Government's rationale to intervene is to protect the benefits to society created by oak, sweet chestnut and *Castanopsis* trees that would be lost as a result of this disease.

Q. Why are these measures being introduced now?

In light of the potential for these pests to enter and establish in the UK, enhanced protection is needed at the earliest opportunity, to mitigate the risk of introduction.

The UK was previously subject to EU-wide processes for new regulations and so it has only been possible to introduce such measures as agreed now the transition period has ended, while also taking into account the ongoing risk associated with these pests.

These measures provide the desired level of protection for plants imported from countries and areas where these pests are present.