



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

**Question and Answer Guide on the Easements for movements of
used agricultural and forestry machinery, and growing media to
Northern Ireland (NI)**

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Do businesses need to apply to the plant health services in Great Britain to be a part of the new requirements?

No, businesses do not need to apply to the plant health services to be part of the pragmatic arrangement. For soil and growing media attached to plants the operator must be authorised to issue plant passport

Why do the plants and the growing media associated with them need to come from an authorised business meeting GB plant passporting requirements?

Authorised plant passporters are required to have knowledge of pest biology and implement best practice in pest prevention. This provides additional assurance on top of the issuance of the phytosanitary certificate.

When are these requirements applicable from?

They are effective immediately, from 4 March 2021.

How long is this pragmatic arrangement in place?

This is a temporary arrangement, and we are continuing to work closely with the EU on how we can develop appropriate, risk-based arrangements for the long-term.

Is soil as a commodity still prohibited?

Yes, soil and growing media as a commodity, such as bags of compost, remain prohibited for entry to NI and the EU.

Is the soil tolerance for ware potatoes included in the pragmatic arrangements for bulbs or vegetables grown in soil?

Yes, ware potatoes can now be exported to Northern Ireland without the need to meet the 1% soil tolerance. Ware potatoes can still be exported even if they have soil attached.

Will an additional declaration still be required on the phytosanitary certificate for soil and ware potatoes?

No, an additional declaration is not required on the phytosanitary certificate.

Can exporters still brush or wash their ware potatoes prior to export?

Yes, if it is part of a commercial arrangement or if the exporter wishes to remove excess soil then they can continue to remove the soil prior to export to NI.

Does this pragmatic arrangement include root and tubercle vegetables and bulbs?

Yes.

Does growing media or soil need to meet the Annex VII requirements for soil attached to plants?

Yes, this is achieved through the systems based approach in conjunction with the obligations under plant passporting, which is why the operator must be authorised to issue plant passports.

Do these plants still require a phytosanitary certificate for movement to NI?

Yes, a phytosanitary certificate is still required to export plants for planting to Northern Ireland.

What about businesses who have invested in ensuring their production facilities meet the required standard?

For exports to the EU, businesses are still required to meet the Annex VII requirements of EU Commission Implementing Regulation 2019/2072. Defra encourages businesses to continue developing processes that enable them to meet the EU's import requirements, while we continue to work closely with the EU on how we can develop appropriate, risk-based arrangements for the long-term.

Do exports of used agricultural and forestry machinery still require a phytosanitary certificate?

No, a phytosanitary certificate is not required for used agricultural or forestry machinery. However, traders should continue to clean the machinery to limit the amount of soil and plant debris that remains.

Will the requirements be re-introduced later?

This is a temporary arrangement, and we are continuing to work closely with the EU on how we can develop appropriate, risk-based arrangements for the long-term.