

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Your ref:
Our ref:
Date: March 2016

RE: Response to the UK policy review for *Agapanthus gall midge*

Thank you for submitting views on the development of a UK policy position for the *Agapanthus gall midge*, this letter is to notify you of the outcome.

Recommendations

The policy review presented the following recommendations:

- No statutory action against findings

Background

The *Agapanthus gall midge*, which is new to science, is a damaging pest of *agapanthus*. In June 2015, the pest was added to the Plant Health Risk Register. As the midge had only been recorded at three sites in southern England at this time, it was decided on a precautionary basis that statutory action should be taken against findings of the *Agapanthus gall midge* on commercially traded plants, to prevent further spread. The midge has now been found to be widespread across the south of England and has been recorded in West Yorkshire where it appears to have successfully overwintered. A Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) was initiated to determine if statutory action was still justified.

Summary of responses

Three responses, one from AHDB Horticulture, one from the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and one from a private nursery were received. All respondents supported the recommendation for no further statutory action against findings, given that the pest appears to be established in some areas and there is no realistic prospect of eradication.

In addition the RHS provided a number of minor factual corrections to the content of risk assessment. These did not affect the overall recommendation and a revised version of the PRA has been published at: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/phiw/riskRegister/plant-health/pest-risk-analysis-consultations.cfm>.

Key issues and government response

No significant concerns were raised.

Next steps

Given the responses received, the UK will accept the recommendation put forward in this policy review for no further statutory action against Agapanthus gall midge. Nurseries which are currently under restriction due to the presence of this pest will have those restrictions lifted. We will continue to work closely with the RHS and others to raise awareness about this pest and to identify options to help suppress it.

I would like to thank all those responding for taking the time to submit views on the consultation. Your comments have been very valuable in helping to develop a policy position on this pest. I hope this letter demonstrates the reasoning behind our decision and that we have sought to find a solution which reflects the current position and the views expressed from different stakeholders. We will be pleased to continue engaging with you about this pest.

If you have any views about how this review was handled, or its outcome, please e-mail the UK Chief Plant Health Officer's unit at: plantpestsrisks@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Richard McIntosh

Assistant Chief Plant Health Officer

Recipients: Organisations listed below (excludes responses from private individuals)

AHDB Horticulture

The Royal Horticultural Society

A private nursery