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Guidance

# Import plants and plant products from the EU to Great Britain and Northern Ireland

How to import plants, fruit, vegetables, cut flowers, trees and agricultural machinery to Great Britain and to Northern Ireland from the EU.

From:  
Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>)

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'Plant' means a living plant (including trees) or a living part of a plant (including a living part of a shrub), at any stage of growth.

'Plant product' means products of plant origin, unprocessed or having undergone simple preparation, in so far as these are not plants, including wood and bark.

Read how to import plants and plant products from non-EU third countries to GB and NI, if you're importing goods from outside the EU. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>)

## Importing from the EU to GB

There are new processes that importers must follow starting in 2021 to import from the EU, Switzerland and Liechtenstein to Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales). This will take place over 3 phases:

- phase 1 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-the-eu-to-great-britain-and-northern-ireland#importing-from-the-eu-to-gb-from-1-january-2021>) - starts on 1 January 2021 and ends on 31 December 2021
- phase 2 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-the-eu-to-great-britain-and-northern-ireland#importing-from-the-eu-to-gb-from-1-january-2022>) - starts on 1 January 2022 and ends in March 2022
- phase 3 (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-plants-and-plant-products-from-the-eu-to-great-britain-and-northern-ireland#importing-from-the-eu-to-gb-from-1-march-2022>) - starts in March 2022

The phased process doesn't apply to imports from Iceland, Greenland or the Faroe Islands to GB, which are still treated as imports from non-EU third countries (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>).

## Importing from the EU to Northern Ireland

There are no changes to the way plants and plant products are imported from the EU to Northern Ireland. These imports can continue in the same way as before.

## Moving goods under transit across GB between the EU and Republic of Ireland

Plants and plant products transported between mainland Europe to the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland can use GB as a landbridge.

You must have a signed declaration stating the goods are under transit.

There is no requirement for pre-notification, the need for a phytosanitary certificate (PC) or for your wood packaging material to be ISPM 15 compliant (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-or-export-wood-packaging-material>) while the goods pass through GB in either direction.

Transiting goods can enter and exit through GB at any port.

## Importing from non-EU countries to GB via the EU

Plants and plant products from a non-EU country (third country) imported to GB will be treated by GB as if they were an EU import, as long as they entered into free circulation and passed plant health checks in the EU. The phased import approach will apply to these goods.

If they do not enter into free circulation in the EU, they will be treated as if they're a direct import from the non-EU country of origin. Read more on imports from non-EU third countries (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>).

## Importing from the EU to GB from 1 January 2021

The first phase of plant and plant product imports from EU to GB starts on 1 January 2021 and ends on 31 December 2021.

High priority plants and plant products from the EU must have:

- a phytosanitary certificate (PC)
- a pre-notification submitted by the importer in England, Scotland or Wales documentary and identity checks
- a physical inspection at places of destination

The plant types on the high priority list include:

- all plants for planting
- ware potatoes
- some seed and other plant/forest reproductive material
- some wood and wood products
- used agricultural or forestry machinery

See the full list of high priority plants and plant products

([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/947327/high-priority-plants-list.odt](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/947327/high-priority-plants-list.odt)) (ODT, 9.02KB).

All other goods that are not on the high-priority list do not require a PC.

You must pre-notify for imports of solid fuel wood that are not regulated. You do not need a PC for these imports.

Before you can import to GB from the EU you'll need to:

- familiarise yourself with phytosanitary import certificate requirements
- consider if you will set up a UK registered address, or appoint a UK-based proxy (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/uploads/Defra-guidance-for-professional-operators-Final.pdf>) to act on your behalf, to import plants and products to England, Scotland or Wales
- register with the Forestry Commission (FC) as a professional operator (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-as-a-professional-operator-to-issue-plant-passports>) if you're importing wood or wood products to England and Wales - importers in Scotland

(<https://www.sasa.gov.uk/plant-health/plant-health-licensing>) and Northern Ireland (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>) should refer to local guidance

- register as a professional operator with Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) on the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Module=Register>)

## Get a phytosanitary certificate

To import regulated plants and plant products, you must get a phytosanitary certificate (PC) for each consignment from the plant health authority in the country where your supplier is.

The PC is a statement from the plant health authority that the consignment:

- has been officially inspected
- meets the legal requirements to enter GB
- is free from quarantine pests and diseases

The PC inspection must take place no more than 14 days before the consignment is dispatched from the country of your supplier.

The certificate must be signed by someone in the inspecting plant health authority within the same 14-day period.

## Place of destination checks on high priority plants and plant products

You can use a commercial 'place of destination' for plant health physical inspections of EU regulated plants and products until 31 December 2021.

From 1 January 2022, all physical checks on high priority regulated goods will take place at authorised border control posts (BCPs) in GB (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-imports-authorized-points-of-entry-to-the-uk>).

Non-EU (third country) imports of plants and plant products will continue to be checked at BCPs.

## Place of destination requirements

An operator who wants to act as a place of destination for physical inspections on EU regulated goods from 1 January 2021 must meet certain requirements.

## Transport and storage

The operator should make sure during transport to and storage at the place of destination that the consignment is:

- not tampered with or subject to any alteration or change of packaging
- closed and sealed properly to reduce the risk of pest infestation and contamination

The consignment must not leave the place of destination before the competent authority decides whether the import passes all of its document, identity and physical checks.

Inspectors must have access to a safe, demarcated area on site to conduct the inspection and there must be systems for safe working in place.

Staff have to be available to present the consignment for inspection.

## Equipment

You must have suitable equipment available for the type and volume of physical inspection required, including:

- handling equipment so that regulated material can be unloaded or loaded as needed
- inspection table
- adequate light source
- equipment to enable fumigant gas testing for forestry sector consignments
- access to toilets and handwashing facilities for inspectors

## Register as a place of destination

To act as a place of destination for plant health physical inspections on EU-regulated high priority goods, you must register with the relevant inspectorate:

- Plant Health in England and Wales
- Plant Health in Scotland

## Plant Health in England and Wales

In England and Wales, you'll need to register the details of your place of destination premises with APHA.

Complete the place of destination registration form (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/place-of-destination-plants-and-plant-products>) and email it to [PODRegistrations@apha.gov.uk](mailto:PODRegistrations@apha.gov.uk).

This registration process includes your registration as a professional operator. You'll need to use the registration process to notify APHA of any importer you wish to be linked to for the supply of your goods.

Register on the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Module=Register>) as an importer for plants and products.

For more information on the place of destination registration process, visit the Plant Health Portal (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/eu-exit-guidance/>).

## Plant Health in Scotland

EU goods imported into Scotland, both directly into Scottish ports and via England, will need to be pre-notified on the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/>).

The Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit (HMU) will carry out all inspections. Contact [hort.marketing@gov.scot](mailto:hort.marketing@gov.scot).

To act as a place of destination for plant health physical inspections on EU-regulated high priority goods in Scotland, complete the registration form (<http://www.sasa.gov.uk/document-library/place-destination-pod-registration-form>) and email it to [hort.marketing@gov.scot](mailto:hort.marketing@gov.scot).

You'll also need to register on the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Module=Register>).

Find more information on the place of destination scheme in Scotland on the Plant Health portal (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/uploads/Policy-PSU-PoD-Note-to-Stakeholders-BSS122020.pdf>).

## Forestry Health in England, Wales and Scotland

To act as a place of destination for plant health inspections on EU-regulated high priority wood and timber products, you need to:

- register as a professional operator (<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6SXFBeT5okyMVeR0AnLDvIanuLidfFdBsPbzaC6GQc9UN0hWREVEMTdXQTZZMDdGUU1YRkVKQ01JVy4u>) with the Forestry Commission (FC)
- register a place of destination (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-a-place-of-destination>) with the FC

## Competent authority checks

You must give advance notification to the relevant plant health service at least:

- 4 working hours before the point goods first arrive into Great Britain (at the port or airport, for example) for air freight and roll-on-roll-off (RoRo)
- one working day for all other freight - in the GB this is primarily deep-sea ports

You must notify the relevant plant health service what time and where the goods will be presented for inspection. This is the pre-registered place of destination. You can do this through the:

- PEACH website for pre-notification
- FC notice of landing (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-of-landing-form>)

The service level agreement for each authority starts when the goods have arrived at the place of destination and are presented ready for inspection to the relevant plant health service.

You must make sure the goods are presented and available for inspection as described in the pre-notification.

If your goods arrive outside of the working hours of the relevant plant health service, your goods may be held overnight at the place of destination until they can be physically inspected. APHA and FC will decide whether to hold goods based on their biosecurity risk.

## APHA: service level agreement and operating hours

APHA can inspect consignments at registered places of destination 7 days a week, 7am to 7pm.

You must use the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/>) to give pre-notification of import at least 4 working hours before the goods arrive into a point of entry in GB via RoRo or air freight.

You should aim to provide as much pre-notification as you are able to in order to receive a decision on whether a physical check will be required as soon as possible. You must give an accurate time for inspection.

APHA will aim to inspect your consignment within 4 working hours of the time the importer gave for inspection in their pre-notification.

If APHA are unable to inspect the goods within 4 working hours, they will release the goods.

In some limited cases, such as where APHA identifies a risk with a specific consignment, the goods will be detained until an inspection has been carried out, even if that goes beyond the 4 working hour window.

There may also be cases where inspections are arranged outside of the 4 working hour window by mutual agreement between APHA and the operator of the place of destination.

APHA will provide a flexible approach to operations where it can, including some out of hours cover where possible, to help manage demand.

APHA will regularly review the service standard provided at places of destination to make sure it stays fit for purpose and to facilitate trade. It will carry out physical checks using a risk-based approach to meet GB biosecurity objectives.

## Forestry Commission: service level agreement and operating hours

FC will inspect consignments of wood, wood products and isolated bark at places of destination throughout GB, including Scotland. FC standard working days are Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

If goods arrive outside of the working hours, then the FC may hold goods overnight until they can be physically inspected. If they arrive on a Friday out of hours they may be held until the following Monday.

FC provides its standard 3-day turnaround regardless of freight type. You must give 4 working hours pre-notification of arrival in GB for goods arriving via RoRo or air freight.

FC will aim to tell businesses if their goods had been selected for inspection before the end of its 3-day turnaround period.

FC will regularly review the service standard provided at places of destinations to make sure it stays fit for purpose and to facilitate trade as much as possible.

It will carry out physical checks using a risk-based approach to meet GB biosecurity objectives. It will carry out documentary checks on all high-priority material.

## Scotland

Consignments can be inspected between 8:30am and 5pm from Monday to Friday (except Scottish Government bank holidays).

The Scottish Government will inspect your consignment within 1 working day of it becoming available. You must give 4 hours notice of landing for arrival by RoRo or air, and 1 day for sea.

## Imports with EU plant passports from 1 January 2021

The EU plant passport is no longer recognised as an official label in GB. Imports from the EU will need a PC.

You will then need to replace the PC with a UK plant passport.

Read how to issue plant passports to move regulated plant material in GB (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/issuing-plant-passports-to-trade-plants-in-the-eu>).

## UK plant passports in the EU

UK plant passports can be attached in an EU member state until 30 June 2022, provided the format and attachment (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/issuing-plant-passports-to-trade-plants-in-great-britain#attachment-of-the-plant-passport>) is correct. This will be reviewed in the future.

However, an EU operator cannot legally issue a UK plant passport under GB plant health rules.

A UK plant passport will have no legal status until it reaches its first place of destination in GB.

## Importing from the EU to GB from 1 January 2022

The second phase of plants and plant product imports from the EU to GB starts on 1 January 2022 and ends in March 2022.

You must use the relevant IT system to notify APHA or FC that you're importing regulated plants and plant products.

All regulated plants and plant products imported to England, Scotland or Wales from the EU must have PCs from 1 January 2022. Get a phytosanitary certificate.

APHA or FC will inspect the PCs in England and Wales. The Scottish Government or FC will inspect PCs in Scotland.

Regulated plants and plant products include:

- all plants for planting
- root and tubercle vegetables
- most common fruits other than fruit preserved by deep freezing
- cut flowers
- some seeds
- leafy vegetables other than vegetables preserved by deep freezing
- seed and ware potatoes
- machinery or vehicles which have been operated for agricultural or forestry purposes

A full list of all regulated plants and plant products can be found on the Plant Health Portal (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/eu-exit-guidance/>).

Using places of destination for physical inspections on high priority goods will no longer be permitted. These inspections will take place at authorised border control posts (BCPs) in the UK.

## Plants that do not need a PC for import from the EU to GB from 1 January 2021

You do not need a PC to import these plants from the EU to GB from 1 January 2021 and will continue to not need a PC from 1 January 2022:

- fruit and vegetables that have been processed and packaged (salads, sandwiches, frozen material)
- composite products (nut or seed butters that contain processed fruit or vegetables)

Botanical name and requirement	Common name
Fruit of <i>Ananas comosus</i>	Pineapple



Botanical name and requirement	Common name
Fruits of Actinidia spp. Lindl,	Kiwi
Fruits of Cocos nucifera L	Coconut
Fruit and leaves of Citrus spp. L.	Citrus
Fruit of Fortunella spp. Swingle	Kumquat
Fruit of Poncirus L. Raf	Bitter orange
Fruit of Diospyros spp. L.	Persimmon
Fruits of Durio zibethinus Murray	Durian
Fruits (bolls) of Gossypium spp.	Cotton (bolls)
Leaves of Murraya spp.	Curry leaves
Fruits of Musa spp.	Banana and plantain
Fruits of Mangifera spp. L.	Mango
Fruits of Phoenix dactylifera L.	Dates
Fruits of Passiflora spp. L	Passionfruit
Fruits of Psidium spp.	Guava

Plants and plant products that do not need a [P.C.](#) will not need plant health controls either.

Plants and plant products not included on this [P.C.](#) exemption list will be subject to import regulations and will need a [P.C.](#)

## Fees and charges on [EU](#) imports

There will be no charge for inspections of [EU](#) imports to [GB](#) between 1 January and 31 May 2021.

You will be charged plant health inspection fees for some plants and plant products from 1 June 2021.

## Documentary checks

You will be charged £5.25 in England and Wales for the examination of official certifications and documents. This fee applies to all regulated plants and plant products.

## Identity checks

This check confirms that the content and labelling of the goods matches the information provided in certifications and documents.

How much you have to pay in England and Wales will depend on the type of plant material you import, including its risk level.

## Physical checks

This charge is for checks on the phytosanitary import requirements for **GB**.

How much you have to pay in England and Wales will depend on the type of plant material you import, including its risk level.

Physical checks include inspecting the health of the plants, the consignment's packaging, means of transport and labelling. Temperature sampling for analysis, laboratory testing or diagnosis may also be required.

Read more about inspection rates and respective fees for **EU** imports that will apply in England and Wales from 1 June 2021 (<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/latest-news/update-on-fees-for-plant-health-services-in-england-and-wales-during-2021-2022/>).

## Importing from the **EU** to **GB** from March 2022

The third and final phase of plant and plant product imports from **EU** to **GB** starts in March 2022.

More regulated **EU** plants and plant products will have identity and physical inspections.

All identity and physical checks will take place at authorised border control posts (**BCPs**) in the UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-imports-authorised-points-of-entry-to-the-uk>).

You must use the relevant IT system to notify **APHA** or **EC** that you're importing regulated plants and plant products.

## Making a pre-notification

You must register on the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Module=Register>) before you start importing plants.

To access PEACH, you must first register with Government Gateway.

After registering with both Government Gateway and PEACH you will be able to use the PEACH website (<http://ehmipeach.defra.gov.uk/>) to make a pre-notification and follow the progress of your consignments.

You must give advance notice to the responsible authority each time you bring a regulated consignment to the **GB**.

You need to give notice of:

- at least 4 working hours before the goods land in the **GB**, for air and 'roll-on-roll-off' freight
- at least 1 working day before the goods arrive in the **GB** for all other freight

PEACH will change to a new IT system in early 2021. You will be contacted to register for the new system when this happens. You should continue to use the PEACH website for pre-notification until then.

## Importing prohibited plant products

Some plants are prohibited from entering **GB** from non-**EU** (third) countries

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/moving-prohibited-plants-plant-pests-pathogens-and-soil>) on plant health grounds.

These prohibitions will not apply to plants and products imported to **GB** from the **EU**.

## Contact

For more information on plant imports, email [planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk](mailto:planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk) or phone 0300 1000 313.

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### 1. 11 March 2021

Updated with new dates for when you'll need to pre-notify imports from the EU, for when they need to enter Great Britain through a Border Control Post (BCP) and fees.

### 2. 31 December 2020

First published.

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## Related content

- Place of destination: plants and plant products (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/place-of-destination-plants-and-plant-products>)
- Notify the Forestry Commission about a timber import (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notice-of-landing-form>)
- Register for the electronic application for phytosanitary certification (EAPC) service (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-apply-for-a-phytosanitary-certificate>)
- Import timber, wood products or bark (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/import-wood-wood-products-or-bark>)
- Import plants and plant products from non-EU countries to Great Britain and Northern Ireland (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>)
- Wood packaging goods for import and export (<https://www.gov.uk/wood-packaging-import-export>)

## Detailed guidance

- Import plants and plant products from non-EU countries to Great Britain and Northern Ireland (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-plants-fruit-vegetables-or-plant-material-to-the-uk>)
- Issue plant passports to move regulated plant material in Great Britain (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/issuing-plant-passports-to-trade-plants-in-great-britain>)

## Collection

- Importing and exporting plants and plant products (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-plants-and-plant-products>)

## Brexit

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Check what you need to do

(<https://www.gov.uk/transition>)

## Explore the topic

- Animal and plant health (<https://www.gov.uk/environment/animal-and-plant-health>)
- Import controls (<https://www.gov.uk/business-and-industry/import-controls>)