



## **Key considerations for importing and exporting plants and plant products if there's no Brexit deal**

### **Overview**

Delivering the deal negotiated with the EU remains the Government's top priority. This has not changed.

However, the Government must prepare for every eventuality, including a no deal scenario. For two years, the Government has been implementing a significant programme of work to ensure that the UK is prepared to leave the EU on March 29 2019.

It has always been the case that as we get nearer to that date, preparations for a no deal scenario would have to be accelerated. We must ensure plans are in place should they need to be relied upon.

Our plant health biosecurity arrangements protect the environment from pests and diseases and we will continue to protect the nation's plant health biosecurity during and after our exit from the EU. Our work to prepare for EU Exit will ensure that biosecurity standards will continue to be met in ways that support trade and the smooth flow of goods.

### **What processes will change and what will a 'No Deal' scenario mean for ports?**

#### **Importing plants and plant products from the EU:**

The majority of plants and plant products entering the UK from the EU will continue to enter without requiring any plant health controls. However, there will be new controls on those higher-risk goods currently managed under the EU plant passport regime. These products will need to enter the UK accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate, and the importer or their agent will need to pre-notify the relevant UK plant health authority in advance of arrival in the UK.

Plants and plant products from EU countries will not be stopped at the border. The relevant UK plant health authority will carry out documentary and identity checks remotely. Plant health inspectors will continue to carry out risk-based physical follow-up inspections as they do now.

How this affects you:

- This is predicted to result in no changes to the current processes for plant health commodities at ports

#### **Importing controlled plants and plant products from third countries via the EU:**

Plants and plant products that come from third countries and receive plant health checks in the EU will be able to move onward to the UK as an EU import, as set out in the section above. However, third country goods which travel to the UK via the EU without having plant health checks carried out by an EU Member State, for example because they are placed into a Customs transit procedure, will be treated as third country imports. They will require plant health checks to be conducted on entry to the UK.

If the goods are entering the UK at a RoRo port, they will either need to be checked inland at authorised trade premises known as a 'Place of First Arrival' (PoFA), or the goods will need to be diverted to a non-RoRo port where checks can be carried out at the border.

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**Key considerations for importing and exporting plants and plant products if there's no Brexit deal (continued)**

How this affects you:

RoRo ports that are approved Points of Entry for plants and plant products or timber (PoEs):

- There will be no additional border checks on Day 1 for plant health purposes. Third country goods will be able to move across the border without stopping for checks, as plant health checks will be carried out inland.

Non-RoRo ports that are approved PoEs:

- In some cases, trade may be diverted from RoRo to non-RoRo ports, depending on whether the importer has an authorised PoFA.
- Non-RoRo ports should be prepared for a potential increase in volumes on Day 1, although it is expected to be low.
- There will be no changes to current processes at the border, plant health checks will continue to happen as they do currently for third country controlled plants and plant products.

Things you can do now:

- Talk to your customers about whether they are likely to divert controlled third country plants and plant products away from RoRo ports on Day 1.
- Consider whether any action is required to accommodate an increase in volumes of such material on Day 1.

For direct imports from third countries (ie deep sea and air freight) there will be no changes to current processes at the border, plant health checks will continue to happen at non-RoRo ports.

**Exporting plants and plant products to the EU:**

When we leave the EU, the UK will become a third country, and will need to meet EU [third country import requirements](#) to export controlled plants and plant products to the EU, including controls on all plants for planting, [wood, wood products or bark](#) and all [wood packaging material](#).

How this affects you:

This is predicted to result in no changes for ports to the current processes

**Moving plants and plant products within the UK:**

Plants and plant products currently covered by the EU plant passport regime when moved within the UK will be managed by UK plant passports rather than EU plant passports. Businesses moving such goods will need to amend their plant passport documentation to replace references to 'EU' with 'UK'. Plant passport rules and processes will otherwise stay the same.

How this affects you:

This is predicted to result in no changes for ports to the current processes

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## **Technical Notice**

Defra published the following guidance on 24 September 2018:

Search

“Importing and exporting plants and plant products if there’s no Brexit deal” on Gov.uk

Updated information and guidance can be found [here](#).

## **Find out more**

Read the [HMRC Partnership Pack](#) preparing for changes at the UK border after a ‘no deal’ EU exit (Plant and timber imports and exports, Pages 62-67)

View a list of [places you can bring consignments of plants, seeds and produce into the UK](#)

Review current rules on [importing plants, fruit, vegetables or plant material to the UK](#), including information on inspection fees, controlled material, notification systems and phytosanitary certificates.

Find out more information on preparing yourself and your business for EU Exit [here](#).

Contact the Defra Biosecurity and Food EU Exit Projects team:

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