

Importing woodchip

Requirements for landing regulated material into Great Britain



Plant Health Guide

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This publication is also available on our website at: www.forestry.gov.uk/publications

Published in 2015 by the Forestry Commission, Silvan House, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT.

ISBN: 978-0-85538-937-6

Forestry Commission (2015).

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Forestry Commission Plant Health Guide. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.

Keywords: woodchip; biomass; imports; inspection; plant health; regulation.

FCPH006/FC-GB(JW)/0K-WWWW/DEC15

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Introduction

Plant Health controls apply to a wide range of wood products, including woodchip. These controls are in place to prevent the spread of pests and pathogens that would be ecologically and economically damaging if introduced to Great Britain (GB). Import regulations are tree species specific, and may vary according to the country of origin and by the type of wood or wood product imported. This note explains the current rules for regulated woodchip entering GB and covers imports from countries outside the European Union (EU) (Section 1), as well as consignments originating in other EU member States (Section 2). This guidance is based on the legislation set out in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 (SI 2005 No. 2517) as amended by later legislation. Importers are advised to check for updates to the legislation before arranging for the supply of any consignment from outside GB. Information about updates to legislation can be obtained by subscribing to a free newsletter from the Forestry Commission (plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk) or by checking the Plant Health pages of the Forestry Commission's website www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth

Scope

This Guide sets out the requirements which have to be met when importing controlled woodchip from non-EU countries into Great Britain or into the EU via Great Britain. The EU member states are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal (including Madeira and the Azores), Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. For the purpose of plant health controls, under the agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation on Trade in Agricultural Products, Switzerland is treated in the same way as the member states and not as a third country. Separate but similar arrangements apply in Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

This Guide also covers the movement of controlled woodchip of EU origin within the EU, some of which requires a plant passport.

GB import requirements from outside the EU (Section 1)

All commercial importers and traders of regulated firewood must be registered with the Forestry Commission. Registration is free and traders must comply with certain obligations placed upon them. Registration also acts as a subscription to a newsletter and any consultations on changes to the way that we regulate forestry material. Applications to register should be made to the Plant Health Service at the Forestry Commission in Edinburgh.

When a consignment of regulated wood is to be imported from a non-EU country the importer (or their agent) must give an inspector three days' advance notice of their intention to land the material. Any phytosanitary documents for the consignment must be presented to a Forestry Commission appointed Plant Health inspector within three days of landing and before the goods can be cleared through Customs. This documentation check and any physical check

on the consignment will be subject to an inspection fee (see Forestry Commission Plant Health Guide: *Import inspection fees for wood, wood products and bark*) and, on satisfactory completion of inspection, a Certificate of Clearance (form PHF28) will be issued to enable the goods to be released from Customs' control.

GB import requirements from another EU country (Section 2)

Movements of regulated woodchip within the EU must be accompanied by Plant Passports to confirm that it meets the landing requirements specified for GB. Within the EU, plant health checks are focused on the place of production, and therefore it is the producer, not the importer, who must be registered to Plant Passport woodchip. Regulated woodchip which is bark-free (with the exception of conifer material from pine wood nematode demarcated areas and plane from other EU member States) does not need to be accompanied by a Plant Passport. In this note, 'bark-free' means wood from which all bark, excluding the vascular cambium, ingrown bark around knots, and pockets between rings of annual growth has been removed. This differs from 'debarked' which means wood which has undergone a process by which some, but not necessarily all of its bark has been removed.

The Plant Passport includes a unique number which identifies the registered timber. Plant passports may only be issued by a registered woodchip producer, authorised to do so by the Plant Health Authority in the country of export, and which should accompany the supply documentation or be incorporated into labels or delivery notes. The importer will need to ensure that a relevant Plant Passport accompanies regulated woodchip landed in GB. Traders dealing with consignments from other EU Member States must retain their records of all transactions, including all Plant Passport documentation, which may be subject to annual inspection.

GB export requirements to another EU country

The same registration process outlined above applies to businesses involved in the export of regulated material outside GB to EU countries that have protected zone status (see Section 2). If moving regulated woodchip, businesses will need to be authorised to issue Plant Passports to accompany consignments of firewood (unless it is produced from bark-free round wood). A business will need to demonstrate that it can meet other countries' landing requirements before authorisation is granted. An inspection fee will be payable for the granting of an authority to issue Plant Passports (as set out in the Plant Health (Forestry) (Fees) Regulations 2006 Schedule 1 (as amended)).

Section 1 - Consignments from outside the EU

Imports of all goods coming from non-EU countries must be declared to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), quoting the relevant Combined Nomenclature (CN) Code from the Integrated Tariff of the United Kingdom. For the purpose of this guidance, it is assumed that consignments will meet the description of CN 4401 21 and 4401 22 for coniferous and non-coniferous woodchip. Reconstituted wood in pellets, briquettes, etc. is not regulated, because the manufacturing process involving heat and pressure removes the plant health risk.

The following tables (1 and 2) detail the special entry requirements for wood of different genera and species originating in countries where risks from quarantine forestry pests and diseases are known to occur.

Table 1 GB entry requirements for coniferous woodchip originating outside the EU.

Material / Country of Origin	Entry Requirement
All coniferous woodchip, originating in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA	Official statement ¹ that the wood has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export, and subsequent to its treatment the wood must be transported, outside of the flight season of the vector <i>Monochamus</i> taking into account a safety margin of four additional weeks at the beginning and end of the expected flight season, or was wrapped with a protective covering ensuring that infestation with <i>Bursaphelenchus xylophilus</i> or its vector cannot occur. Bark-free wood can be moved at anytime without a protective covering. Wood must be bark-free when landed in GB.
All coniferous woodchip, originating in Russia, Kazakhstan or Turkey or non-European countries other than Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Taiwan and the USA	Official statement that the wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) originates in areas known to be free from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Monochamus</i> spp. (non-European) • <i>Pissodes</i> spp. (non-European) • <i>Scolytidae</i> spp. (non-European), and (b) has been produced from bark-free round wood, or (c) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content, or (d) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export.
All coniferous woodchip, originating in European third countries (including Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, FYR Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia and Ukraine, but does not include Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkey)	No special requirements for bark-free wood. For wood which is not bark-free the wood shall be accompanied by an official statement that it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content, or (b) originates in an area known to be free from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ips duplicatus</i> • <i>Ips typographus</i> • <i>Ips amitinus</i>

¹ An 'Official statement' means a phytosanitary certificate issued by the National Plant Protection Organisation in the country of export. ² Moisture content is expressed as a percentage of the dry matter achieved through an appropriate time/temperature schedule.

Table 2 GB entry requirements for non-coniferous woodchip originating outside the EU.

Species	Country of Origin	Entry Requirement
Birch (<i>Betula</i>)	Canada, USA	Official statement that it originates in a country known to be free of <i>Agrilus anxius</i>
Oak (<i>Quercus</i> L.)	USA	Official statement that the woodchip: (a) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content, or (b) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export
Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>) also known as hard maple, sugar maple or rock maple	Canada, USA	Official statement that the woodchip: (a) has been produced from debarked round wood, or (b) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export, or (c) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content
Plane (<i>Platanus</i> L.)	Armenia, Switzerland or the USA	Official statement that the woodchip: (a) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export, or (b) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content
Poplar/Aspen (<i>Populus</i> L.)	Any country in the American continent	Official statement that the woodchip: (a) has been produced from debarked round wood, or (b) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, the latter to be indicated on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export, or (c) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content
Ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> L.), Japanese walnut (<i>Juglans ailantifolia</i>), Manchurian Walnut (<i>Juglans mandshurica</i>), David Elm (<i>Ulmus davidiana</i>) and Japanese Wingnut (<i>Pterocarya rhoifolia</i>)	Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Taiwan and the USA	Woodchips must originate in an area recognised (by the European Commission) as being free from Emerald Ash Borer. The name of the area must be declared on the accompanying phytosanitary certificate.
Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea</i> L.)	All non-EU Countries except Switzerland	No special requirements for woodchip produced from bark-free round wood. For woodchips not produced from bark-free round wood they shall be accompanied by an official statement that it: (a) originates in an area or areas known to be free from <i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i> (Murril.) Barr, or (b) has undergone kiln drying to below 20% moisture content.

Section 2 - Consignments from within the EU

Although not subject to Customs formalities, regulated consignments meeting the woodchip description and originating in other EU member States, will, nevertheless be subject to plant health controls before entering GB. A number of tree pests and pathogens found in the EU are not currently present in GB. In such instances, parts of GB have 'Protected Zone' status in the EU, requiring special measures for the import of regulated material. Plant Passport controls currently apply to woodchip of sweet chestnut, plane and coniferous species entering GB as a Protected Zone from any other part of the EU. Controls also apply in respect of movements of coniferous woodchip from GB to other EU Protected Zones i.e. Greece, Ireland, Cyprus, France (Corsica) and other parts of the UK (Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Jersey). This is because these regions are free of certain pests that are present in GB. Plant Passport inspection can identify the supplying trader and trace the movement of the regulated material to the supplying trader should a pest or pathogen problem be found when the material is received by the importer.

Table 3 GB entry requirements for all regulated woodchip originating in other EU member states.

Wood	Entry Requirement
All coniferous wood, in the form of chips, originating in EU members States except Portugal or other Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas (see sources of further information on page 6)	Woodchips have been produced from bark-free round wood, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: (a) originates in an area known to be free from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ips duplicatus</i> • <i>Ips typographus</i> • <i>Ips amitinus</i>, or (b) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content
All coniferous wood, in the form of chips, originating in Portugal or other Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas (see sources of further information on page 6)	Official statement (Plant Passport) that the wood has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes to eradicate Pine Wood Nematode. Commission Implementing Decision 2012/535/EU see – (Article 10 and Section 1 of Annex III) when it is exported to other EU member states.
Sweet chestnut (<i>Castanea L.</i>) wood, in the form of chips	Woodchips have been produced from bark-free round wood, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: (a) originates in an area known to be free from <i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i> . (the cause of Sweet Chestnut Blight), or (b) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content.
Plane (<i>Platanus L.</i>) wood, in the form of chips	Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: (a) originates in areas known to be free from <i>Ceratocystis fimbriata f.sp. platani</i> (the cause of Canker Stain of Plane), or (b) that it has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content.

Note: If there is any doubt as to the genera or species of woodchip at the time of import the consignment will be regarded as regulated. It is therefore important, especially for woodchip not containing any of the genera or species listed in the tables above, that the commercial documentation provides adequate information.

Further reading and useful sources of information

For information and advice on forestry plant health matters in Great Britain, or to obtain a copy of the Service Standard leaflet, visit: www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth or contact the Forestry Commission Plant Health team:

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Plant Health publications

Plant Health Guides

- Importing wood, wood products and bark (FCPH001)
- Import inspection fees for wood, wood products and bark (FCPH002)
- Export certification (FCPH003)
- The United Kingdom Wood Packaging Material Marking Programme (FCPH004)
- Importing firewood (FCPH005)
- Importing woodchip (FCPH006)
- Minimum facilities at ports (FCPH007)

Other publications

For information on all Forestry Commission publications, visit: www.forestry.gov.uk/publications

Digital (pdf) versions of many titles, including this one, are available to view and download.

Other useful websites

For information on pine wood nematode demarcated areas within EU member states:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_health_biosafety/legislation/emergency_control_measures_en.htm



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