

Import inspection fees for wood, wood products and bark

Controlled material inspection fees
for imports from non-EC countries



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Introduction

The imports of wood, wood products and bark from certain tree species and origins are controlled materials which are subject to chargeable import inspection. This Guide explains which imports of wood, wood products and bark are subject to inspection fees, how much the fees are, and how they may be paid.* It does not explain the landing requirements in place to prevent the introduction of forest tree pests; this is covered in a separate Forestry Commission Plant health Guide, *Importing wood, wood products and bark*.

Copies can be obtained free of charge from the Forestry Commission Plant health team or downloaded from www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth. Further details are on page 8.

Which imports must be inspected

Imports of wood, wood products and bark of the species and origins referred to below must be declared to the Forestry Commission for inspection. Table 1 sets out the principal materials subject to control and their combined nomenclature (CN) codes. The Plant health guide *Importing wood, wood products and bark* gives more detailed information on the import requirements, which are also set out in Schedule 4 Part A of the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005, as amended.

Controlled species and their origins are:

- All conifers (*Coniferales*), e.g. European redwood and whitewood, maritime pine, spruce, pine, fir (SPF), western red cedar, originating in third countries (except wood which originates in a European third country and which is bark free).
- Maple (*Acer saccharum*) (otherwise known as hard maple, sugar maple, rock maple) originating in the USA or Canada.
- Sweet chestnut (*Castanea*) originating in any third country (except wood which is bark free).
- Oak (*Quercus*) originating in the USA.
- Plane (*Platanus*) originating in the USA or Armenia.
- Poplar/aspen (*Populus*) originating in countries of the American continent.
- Ash (*Fraxinus*): originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Rep. of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA.
- Mandshurin walnut: (*Juglans mandshurica*) originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Rep. of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA.
- David elm (*Ulmus davidiana*): originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Rep. of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA.
- Chinese or lace bark elm (*Ulmus parvifolia*): originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Rep. of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA;
- Japanese wing nut (*Pterocarya rhoifolia*) originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA.

Additionally, prefabricated buildings comprised of wood derived from any of the species mentioned above, and originating in any of the relevant countries, are also subject to chargeable inspection.

*This guide is not an authoritative statement of the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Plant Health (Fees) (Forestry) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Table 1 HM Customs combined nomenclature codes for materials subject to control.

CN code	Material
4401 10 00	Fuel wood, in logs, in billets, in twigs, in faggots or in similar forms (includes isolated bark).
4401 21 00	Coniferous wood, in chips or particles.
4401 22 00	Non-coniferous wood, in chips or particles.
4401 30 40	Sawdust not agglomerated in logs, briquettes or similar forms.
4401 30 80 (ex)	Other wood waste and scrap, not agglomerated in logs, briquettes, pellets or similar forms.
4403 10 00	Wood in the rough, treated with paint, stains, creosote or other preservatives, whether or not stripped of bark or sapwood, or roughly squared.
4403 20	Coniferous wood in the rough, other than treated with paint, stains, creosote or other preservatives, whether or not stripped of bark or sapwood, or roughly squared.
4403 91	Oak wood (<i>Quercus</i> spp.) in the rough, other than treated with paint, stains, creosote or other preservatives, whether or not stripped of bark or sapwood, or roughly squared.
4403 99	Non-coniferous wood (other than tropical wood specified in subheading note 1 to Chapter 44 or other tropical wood, oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp.) or beech (<i>Fagus</i> spp.)), in the rough, whether or not stripped of bark or sapwood, or roughly squared, not treated with paint, stains, creosote or other preservatives.
4404 (ex)	Split poles; piles, pickets and stakes of wood, pointed but not sawn lengthwise.
4406	Railway or tramway sleepers (cross-ties) of wood.
4407 10	Coniferous wood, sawn or chipped lengthwise, sliced or peeled, whether or not planed, sanded or end-jointed, of a thickness exceeding 6 mm.
4407 91	Oak wood (<i>Quercus</i> spp.), sawn or chipped lengthwise, sliced or peeled, whether or not planed, sanded or end-jointed, of a thickness exceeding 6 mm.
4407 93	Maple wood (<i>Acer saccharum</i> and <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>) planed, sanded, end jointed, whether or not planed or sanded, other wood.
4407 99 (ex)	Non-coniferous wood (other than tropical wood specified in subheading note 1 to Chapter 44 or other tropical wood, oak (<i>Quercus</i> spp.) or beech (<i>Fagus</i> spp.)), sawn or chipped lengthwise, sliced or peeled, whether or not planed, sanded or end-jointed, of a thickness exceeding 6 mm.
4415	Packing cases, boxes, crates, drums and similar packings, of wood; cable-drums of wood; pallets, box pallets and other load boards, of wood; pallet collars of wood.
4416 00 00	Casks, barrels, vats, tubs and other cooperers' products and parts thereof, of wood, including staves.
9406 00 20	Prefabricated buildings of wood.

What are the fees and how are they calculated?

Inspection fees include separate charges for documentary, identity and plant health checks. This separation is necessary because in certain circumstances where an agreement has been reached with the authorities in another member state, the documentary check may be carried out and charged for there (the first point of entry into the Community) while the identity and plant health checks may be carried out and charged for in GB. Equally, it may be that only the documentary check will be performed and charged for in GB where the consignment is going to another member state and will be inspected there. The definitions of documentary, identity and plant health checks are:

- **Documentary check**

A check that the consignment or lot is accompanied by the required phytosanitary certificate or alternative document and that these are properly completed.

- **Identity check**

It shall be verified that the consignment presented for introduction into the EU meets

the description given in the accompanying document. Therefore, the description of the consignment, i.e. the species, volume etc., as set out in the certificates described in Procedures for Documentary Checks shall be compared with the accompanying commercial paperwork and, where practicable, with the material itself.

- **Plant health check**

A check on the whole consignment, or on one or more representative samples (including the packaging and, where appropriate, the transport vehicles, or the wood packaging material) to ensure that it complies with the requirements laid down in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005.

Documentary checks

For a documentary check the fee is £6.00 per consignment. Where there is more than one certificate in a single consignment, only one charge is made. This arrangement is being kept under review.

Identity checks

For identity checks, other than for bulk shipments, the fee is £6.00 where the consignment is a load of up to one container, railway wagon or truck. A load is defined as 30 m³ of controlled material. A further fee of £6.00 is payable for each additional 30 m³ (or part thereof), per container, wagon or truck in the consignment. Fees for bulk shipments are:

- £6.00 for consignments less than 100 m³
- £12.00 for consignments of 100 m³ or more.

Plant health checks

The EU Plant Health Directive requires that all consignments of controlled wood, wood products and bark be physically inspected. Where goods are not subjected to reduced levels of physical inspection the plant health check fees are:

- £26.00 per consignment up to and including 100 m³
- £0.20 for each additional m³

Goods can be subjected to reduced levels of physical inspection which are set by the European Commission and are based on risk i.e. on a random sample of consignments rather than each one. The Forestry Commission currently applies a reduced frequency of inspection regime to wood of maple (*Acer saccharum*) which is imported from Canada and the USA and the plant health check fees are:

Maple imports from Canada

- £6.13 per consignment up to and including 100 m³
- £0.10 for each additional m³ or part thereof

Maple imports from USA

- £9.19 per consignment up to and including 100 m³
- £0.15 for each additional m³ or part thereof

A summary of all the inspection fees is provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Inspection fees.

Type of check	Quantity	Fee (£)
Documentary checks	Per consignment	6.00
Identity checks For each load of up to 30 m ³ forming part of the consignment contained in one truck, railway wagon, or comparable container	Per consignment	6.00
Identity checks For bulk loads	Less than 100 m ³	6.00
	100 m ³ or more	12.00
Plant health checks Per consignment of wood (Other than in the form of shavings, chips or sawdust).	Up to 100 m ³	26.00
	Each additional m ³ or part thereof	0.20
Reduced Frequency of Inspection Plant Health checks <i>Acer saccharum</i> (hard maple, sugar maple or rock maple).	Up to 100 m ³ originating in Canada	6.13
	Up to 100 m ³ originating in USA	9.19
	For each additional m ³ or part thereof originating in Canada	0.10
	For each additional m ³ or part thereof originating in USA	0.15
Plant health checks Per consignment of isolated bark and wood in the form of shavings, chips or sawdust	Up to 25 000 kg	26.00
	Each additional 1000 kg or part thereof	0.49
	Maximum price	98.00

Inspections performed at a place other than point of entry

It is possible for plant health checks of controlled material to be carried out at a place other than the point of entry, or at a place close by.

Forestry Commission inspectors can only agree to perform inspections of controlled material at sites inland where importers have had their premises approved by the Forestry Commission and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to permit plant health inspections to be carried out at a place other than at the point of entry. Enquiries about approving premises for inland inspection should, in the first instance, be routed via a plant health regional manager (see page 8).

Where inspections are permitted at 'approved places of inspection' a fee of £30 (based on an average 1.5 hours additional travel required to perform an inland inspection) is payable in addition to the fees detailed in Table 2. This charge is being kept under review.

Who is responsible for payment?

Unless special arrangements have been made for payment (see page 6), the person or organisation notifying us of the need for an inspection, or presenting the phytosanitary certificate(s) to us, will be held responsible for the payment of fees.

How should the fee be paid?

The fee may be paid by cheque, credit/debit card or cash, and, under special arrangements, by credit account (see Applying for a credit account on page 6). The payment must be received by the Forestry Commission before a Certificate of Clearance (PHF28) can be issued, and this is needed before goods can be cleared through Customs and removed from the port of entry. It is only possible to pay the fee by cash or cheque (which must be supported by a bank guarantee card and made payable to 'Forestry Commission') where an inspector visits your office as part of the inspection. He/she will not make a special visit to collect payment.

Cheques can be posted to the Forestry Commission Plant Health Service (see page 8), although three days clearance from the date of receipt is required for cheques not supported by a bank guarantee card. All cheques and cash payments will be receipted. Credit/debit card payments should be made by telephoning the Forestry Commission Credit Management branch on 0131 314 6181. The unique serial number of the Certificate of Clearance or invoice that the payment is being made against should be quoted.

When a payment is being made against a Certificate of Clearance, a transaction reference number will be issued which will be sent to the inspector detailed on the Certificate by Credit Management branch. The inspector will then add the transaction reference number to the Certificate of Clearance to advise the Plant Health Service that payment has been made.

Importers must, by law, give an inspector at least three days advance notice of the arrival of all goods which are subject to inspection. Unless a credit account has been opened, it is recommended that a cheque for the fee is sent at the same time as this advance notice is given. You should speak to a regional manager if you wish to use this procedure and he will advise on the amount of fee due. This will ensure that any delay in issuing a Certificate of Clearance after an inspection (while waiting for funds to clear) is kept to a minimum. A copy of the phytosanitary or industry certificate and commercial documentation may be used for the purpose of advance calculation and payment of the inspection fee. The copy certificate must accompany the payment with sufficient information to enable identification of the inspection it relates to.

By law, you must give the inspector the original phytosanitary certificates within three days of the goods being landed. Except in exceptional circumstances, the Forestry Commission will not be able to complete its inspection and clear goods until the certificates are provided. An example of an exceptional circumstance is a postal strike. If circumstances change, and the goods will not be ready for inspection at the time originally notified, you must let the Forestry Commission know, otherwise a charge may be made for an abortive visit.

What are the special arrangements for payment?

Most importers use a Customs clearance agent with whom the Forestry Commission has arranged a credit facility (see Applying for a credit account, below). You may wish to arrange for your agent to calculate and make payment on your behalf. Normal practice will be for the agent to collect the fee from you and remit it to us in the month following the inspection. The agent may charge for this service and you should seek details from them. However, where you wish to carry out all of the plant health clearance work, and you intend to import on a regular basis, you may apply to us for a credit agreement yourself.

Applying for a credit account

It is Forestry Commission policy to offer credit to those customers who request it, subject to credit worthiness being established. Customers granted credit are required to pay for goods before the end of the month following the month in which the PHF28 Certificate of Clearance was issued.

An assessment of credit worthiness will be carried out to establish the maximum level of risk before any formal offer of a credit facility is made to a customer. Credit will then be offered up to, but not exceeding, this level. The amount of credit offered will also reflect the level of trading. Responsibility for carrying out assessments of credit worthiness, and the subsequent offering of credit facilities, lies with the Forestry Commission Credit Manager. A customer seeking credit from the Forestry Commission for the first time should obtain a credit application form (see page 8), which will then be assessed.

- Where the level of credit is likely to be £10,000 or less, customers will be asked to supply a bank reference, credit agency report and a local background report.
- Where the level of credit is likely to be £10,000 or more, customers will be asked to supply the above mentioned documents plus company accounts – which shall be not more than 12 months old.

From time to time applications for credit are received from newly-formed businesses, which do not have a trading record of sufficient length upon which to base a reliable assessment of risk. Provided a satisfactory bank reference and local background report have been obtained, a credit facility of up to £2500 may be offered without security. There will be a requirement for any credit offered above this level to be secured against a bank guarantee.

For existing credit customers a fresh assessment of risk will be carried out routinely, at least every 12 months, or when the customer requests a higher credit limit. These routine re-assessments of risk will take account of payment performance, bank references (where necessary) and company accounts (where credit limit is > £10k).

Where customers are deemed not to meet the requirements, credit limits will be reviewed and possibly reduced.

In the event of bankruptcy, those importers operating a credit account directly with the Forestry Commission will be liable for any debts. Similarly, where an agent is authorised by an importer to act on their behalf, the importer will be held liable for the debts. However, where an agent operates a credit account directly with the Forestry Commission in their own right, they will be held liable for any debts as a result of bankruptcy.

What if volume declared is wrong?

It is a statutory requirement that phytosanitary certificates accurately describe the volume of material to which they relate. Sometimes certificates declare types of wood which are not subject to inspection. Where it is possible to identify from the certificate the volume and identity/lot numbers of such material, the Forestry Commission will not demand a fee for that part of the consignment. However, if it is not possible to segregate uncontrolled goods, the Forestry Commission will need to inspect the whole consignment and will charge accordingly. It is your responsibility to ensure that certificates are accurate and you are advised to make the requirements known as part of your contract with your supplier.

What if goods do not pass inspection?

Because the work has been carried out the fee will still be payable. An inspector will serve a statutory notice telling you what needs to be done, and the date it must be done by. Any remedial work, which may involve destruction, re-export or treatment, must be carried out to the specification and satisfaction of the Forestry Commission, and under its surveillance. The Forestry Commission will charge for this additional monitoring work. In certain instances, for example where the work required has not been carried out by the due date, the Forestry Commission may do the work itself, or contract another person to do it and charge accordingly. Where treatment of the material is appropriate, a Certificate of Clearance will not be issued until the Forestry Commission is satisfied that the material has been treated to the required specification and poses no further risk to plant health.

What is the charge for remedial work?

Due to the variable factors involved (for example, the size of consignment, the volume affected, and the type of remedial treatment required) the charge is time based. For the first hour, including travelling and office time, the charge is £37. For each 15 minutes or part thereof thereafter, the charge is £9.25. Should office time be required after a site visit, this time will be chargeable at the £9.25 rate. The Forestry Commission will aim to keep this cost to a minimum by remaining on site only long enough to ensure that treatment is being carried out properly and to its specification. However, it will be necessary to inspect the material on completion of the treatment to ensure that it has been effective. The visits will, insofar as is possible, be planned to coincide with the notified timing of treatment. It will be important, therefore, to ensure that the Forestry Commission is kept informed of any changes to agreed arrangements. The fee for this monitoring work becomes due on completion of the remedial work and must be paid before a Certificate of Clearance is issued. Alternatively, you will be issued with an invoice which you may pay through your credit account, if you have one, or by cash or cheque.

Further reading and useful sources of information

Our commitment

Under its Service Standard, the Forestry Commission aims to carry out inspections either on the day that it is notified that the goods have been landed, are ready for inspection, and the documentation is available, or the next working day. If for any reason the Forestry Commission is unable to meet this aim you will be contacted by telephone and informed of the reason why and given a revised time for carrying out the inspection. If your goods do not meet the landing requirements the Forestry Commission will offer to meet you on site to explain what is wrong and to try to agree with you what action should be taken. If you have a complaint, the inspector will explain to you how you can pursue it.

For information and advice on 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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ian.brownlee@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

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07831 204324
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For plant health matters in Northern Ireland, visit: www.forestserviceni.gov.uk or contact:

Forest Service
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road

Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3SB
02890 524116
grants.forests@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

For an application form to open a credit account, contact the Credit Manager at:

Forestry Commission
Silvan House
231 Corstorphine Road,
Edinburgh EH12 7AT
0131 314 6394
credit.management@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Send cheques, payable to the 'Forestry Commission' to the Plant Health Service at the above address. To make a credit/debit card payment, telephone 0131 314 6181.

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)
- Plant health and the single market (FCPH007)
- Plant health and the single market: guidance on EC plant health controls for registered forestry traders (FCPH008)

Plant health notes

- Minimum facilities at ports (FCPH110)
- The use of dunnage in British ports (FCPH111)

Other publications

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

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