

PLANT HEALTH NEWSLETTER

NO. 26 (June 2009)

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1. Update on import controls introduced on 1st April 2009 to guard against the threat from Emerald Ash Borer

Back in February we advised timber importers of the new import controls that were adopted in EU Commission Directive 2009/7/EC for wood of Ash (*Franxinus* spp.) and four other less commonly imported species where they originated in Canada, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea Russia, Taiwan and USA.

The new import controls were effected on 1st April and since then our inspectors have been performing physical checks of the newly controlled species (predominately Ash from North America) which have been imported to Great Britain mainly through the ports of Liverpool and Felixstowe.

Our inspectors initially found that many of the phytosanitary certificates that accompanied the consignments did not contain an official statement declaring that – ‘*The wood originated in an area established by the National Plant Protection Organisation, in the country of export, as being free from Emerald Ash Borer (Agrilus planipennis)*’ and thus the wood should have met the alternative requirement that it be squared so as to remove entirely the rounded surface.

Additionally, our inspectors also found that wood which was being declared on phytosanitary certificates as being ‘square sawn’ had substantial amounts of rounded (waney) edges and pieces of bark were also evident. Consignments were therefore detained for further more detailed examination.



Photo (© Forestry Commission). Consignment of containerised wood of ash with waney edges and is not square sawn.

Where the quantity of waney edges or bark has been proportionally low in terms of the overall consignment - inspectors have to date been releasing it where no plant health risk was found and we have been warning importers to advise suppliers to ensure consignments comply in future.

2. New stringent action for non-compliant ash material

(***Important Note for timber importers*****)**

However, with effect from **1st July 2009** Inspectors will start to take more stringent action against wood of ash that has not been squared, so as to entirely remove the round surface, unless there is a declaration that the material has originated in an area that is known to be free of Emerald Ash Borer.

This more stringent action will involve the non-compliant material being either –

- Destroyed by burning
- Sent for deep burial at a land fill site
- Re-exported out of the EU
- Released after removal of the non-compliant boards from the consignment, undertaken at the point of entry and under FC surveillance

All costs incurred by the FC in dealing with non-compliant consignments will be charged at the rate of fee set out in the Plant Health (Fees)(Forestry) Regulations 2006.

Importers of wood of ash are therefore strongly advised to ensure that their supply contracts clearly state that their material must meet the landing requirements of the EU before it is shipped in order to avoid costly delays and remedial action. Importers may also want to make it a contractual obligation that any costs incurred as a result of non-compliance will be the seller's liability.

3. Enquiries

All enquiries relating to this newsletter should be directed to the relevant Plant Health Manager –

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