

Importing firewood

Requirements for landing
material into Great Britain



Plant Health Guide

Importing firewood

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Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction | 1 |
| GB import requirements from non-EU countries | 2 |
| GB import requirements from another EU country | 2 |
| GB requirements for export to another EU country | 3 |
| Wood packaging material | 3 |
| Section 1 - Consignments from outside the EU | 4 |
| Section 2 - Consignments from within the EU | 8 |
| Further reading and useful sources of information | 9 |

Introduction

Plant Health controls apply to a wide range of wood products, including firewood. 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 controls 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 firewood (including kindling) 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.

Statutory Notification Scheme

In addition to the import regulatory requirements outlined in this document, your attention is drawn to the new firewood (solid fuel wood) statutory notification requirements. The imports covered by this new scheme are outlined below:

Criteria for new firewood notification scheme.

| Firewood Origin | Regulated or non-regulated material | Notification |
|------------------|--|---|
| Non EU countries | Regulated material (See section 1 and Tables 1 & 2 for details) | Existing notification system and import controls as set out in article 6 of the Plant Health Forestry Order 2005. FC inspection at point of entry Customs clearance via PHF28 Certificate of Clearance form issued by FC Plant Health Inspector |
| Non-EU countries | Non-Regulated material | Notification is required as per the new statutory notification scheme from 2016 onwards |
| EU countries | Non-Regulated material | |
| EU countries | Regulated material (see section 2, table 3) | |

The new notification system covers imports into England and Scotland. All relevant consignments, irrespective of size/weight must be notified. The purpose of this is to allow the Forestry Commission to monitor the extent of the firewood import trade where data is not already captured (data capture is already available on regulated firewood from non-EU countries). The Forestry Commission will carry out risk based and random inspections of consignments. This will ensure that they meet GB landing requirements when the firewood or its associated wood packaging material is regulated (and is not covered by existing inspections as outlined above) or the declaration that the firewood is from a non-regulated species is correct.

The process involves an initial enrolment, followed by completion of either an online or a paper notification form for each consignment of firewood being imported. Full details and guidance on the enrolment and notification process can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth.

Scope

This Guide sets out the requirements which have to be met when importing controlled firewood 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 firewood of EU origin within the EU, some of which requires a plant passport.

GB import requirements from outside the EU

In accordance with legislation, 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 as registered forestry traders. 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 Cross Border Plant Health Service at the Forestry Commission in Edinburgh.

When a consignment of regulated wood is to be imported from a non-EU country (see Section 1, p4) 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

Movements of regulated firewood within the EU must be accompanied by Plant Passports to confirm that they meet the landing requirements specified for GB (see Section 2, p8). 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 firewood. Regulated firewood that is bark-free (with the exception of conifer material from pine wood nematode demarcated areas and pine from other EU member states) does not need to be accompanied by a Plant Passport. In this Guide '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.

The Plant Passport includes a unique number which identifies the registered forestry trader. Plant passports may only be issued by a registered firewood producer, authorised to do so by the Plant Health Authority in the country of export, and 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 firewood 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 requirements for export 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 firewood, businesses will need to be authorised to issue Plant Passports to accompany consignments of firewood (unless it is bark free, with the exception of plane). 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)).

Wood packaging material

All wood packaging material used to package and transport firewood products from non-EU countries must comply with ISPM15 (see Figure 1 in Forestry Commission Plant Health Guide: *Importing wood, wood products and bark*). Wood packaging material made from regulated timber originating in the EU and used to package and transport firewood products from other EU countries must meet the same landing requirements as the regulated timber referred to in Table 3. Wood packaging material made from conifer wood originating in Portugal and demarcated areas in Spain must be compliant with ISPM15. For details of demarcated areas in Portugal and Spain see Useful websites on page 9.

Section 1 - Consignments from non-EU countries

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 presumed that consignments will meet the description of CN 4401 10 for solid fuelwood. This covers fuelwood in the form of logs, billets, twigs, faggots and similar forms. Reconstituted wood in pellets, briquettes, etc. is not regulated, because the heat and pressure in the manufacturing process remove the plant health risk.

The following tables (1 and 2) detail the special entry requirements for regulated wood of different genera and species originating in countries where risks from quarantine forestry pests and diseases are known to occur. For imports of non regulated wood see details of the Statutory Notification Scheme on page 1.

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

| Material / Country of Origin | Entry Requirement |
|---|--|
| All coniferous wood, other than consignments comprised wholly of wood of <i>Thuja L.</i> , or <i>Taxus L.</i> originating in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA | Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> has undergone heat treatment¹ to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, and subsequent to its treatment the wood was transported, until leaving the country issuing that statement, 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. |
| Wood of <i>Thuja L.</i> (western red cedar) or <i>Taxus L.</i> (Yew), originating in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA | Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> is bark-free, or has undergone heat treatment¹ to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, or has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20% moisture content |
| All coniferous wood, originating in Russia, Kazakhstan or Turkey | Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> originates in areas known to be free from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Monochamus spp.</i> (non-European) <i>Pissodes spp.</i> (non-European) <i>Scolytidae spp.</i> (non-European), and is bark-free and free from grub holes larger than 3mm across caused by the genus <i>Monochamus spp.</i> (non-European), or has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20% moisture content, or has undergone heat treatment¹ to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes |
| All coniferous wood, originating in non-EU countries other than: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russia, Kazakhstan or Turkey European countries Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA | Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> is bark-free and free from grub holes larger than 3mm across caused by the genus <i>Monochamus spp.</i> (non-European), or has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20% moisture content, or has undergone heat treatment¹ to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes |
| All coniferous wood, 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 must be accompanied by an official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20% moisture content, or 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> |

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

| Material / Country of Origin | Entry Requirement |
|---|--|
| <p>Birch (<i>Betula</i>), originating in Canada or the USA</p> <p><i>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements – see final entry in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</i></p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood:</p> <p>(a) has bark and at least 2.5 cm of the outer sapwood removed in an approved facility, or</p> <p>(b) the wood has undergone ionizing irradiation to achieve a minimum absorbed dose of 1 kGy throughout the wood</p> |
| <p>Oak (<i>Quercus L.</i>), originating in the USA</p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood:</p> <p>(a) has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20 % moisture content, or</p> <p>(b) is bark-free and below 20 % moisture content, or</p> <p>(c) is bark-free and disinfected by an appropriate hot-air or hot water treatment, or</p> <p>(d) is squared so as to remove entirely the rounded surface</p> |
| <p>Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>) also known as hard maple, sugar maple or rock maple, originating in Canada or the USA</p> <p><i>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements – see final entry in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</i></p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20 % moisture content</p> |
| <p>Plane (<i>Platanus L.</i>), originating in Armenia, Switzerland or the USA</p> <p><i>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements – see final entry in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</i></p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20 % moisture content</p> |
| <p>Poplar/Aspen (<i>Populus L.</i>), originating in Armenia, Switzerland or the USA</p> <p><i>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements - see final entry in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</i></p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood:</p> <p>(a) is bark-free, or</p> <p>(b) has undergone kiln-drying¹ to below 20 % moisture content</p> |

| Material / Country of Origin | Entry Requirement |
|---|---|
| <p>Ash (<i>Fraxinus L.</i>), Japanese walnut (<i>Juglans ailantifolia</i>), Manshurin Walnut (<i>Juglans mandshurica</i>), David Elm (<i>Ulmus davidiana</i>) (see bottom box for additional phytosanitary requirements from specific countries of origin) and Japanese Wingnut (<i>Pterocarya rhoifolia</i>), originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Taiwan or the USA</p> <p>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements – see final entry in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood:</p> <p>(a) has bark and at least 2.5 cm of the outer sapwood removed in an approved facility, or</p> <p>(b) the wood has undergone ionizing irradiation to achieve a minimum absorbed dose of 1 kGy throughout the wood, or</p> <p>(c) originates in an area recognised (by the European Commission) as being free from <i>Agrilus planipennis</i>. The name of the area must be marked on the Phytosanitary Certificate</p> |
| <p>Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea L.</i>), originating in all non-EU Countries except Switzerland</p> | <p>No special requirements for bark-free wood.</p> <p>For wood which is not bark-free the wood must be accompanied by an official statement (phytosanitary certificate) confirming that the wood:</p> <p>(a) originates in an area or areas known to be free from <i>Cryphonectrica parasitica</i> (Murril.) Barr, or</p> <p>(b) has undergone kiln drying¹ to below 20% moisture content</p> |
| <p>Maple (<i>Acer spp</i>), Horse chestnut (<i>Aesculus spp</i>), Alder (<i>Alnus spp</i>), Birch (<i>Betula spp</i>), Hornbeam (<i>Carpinus spp</i>), Katsura tree (<i>Cercidiphyllum spp</i>), Hazel (<i>Corylus spp</i>), Beech (<i>Fagus spp</i>), Ash (<i>Fraxinus spp</i>), Golden Rain tree (<i>Koelreuteria spp</i>), Plane (<i>Platanus spp</i>), Poplar (<i>Populus spp</i>), Willow (<i>Salix spp</i>), Lime (<i>Tilia spp</i>) and Elm (<i>Ulmus spp</i>) originating in Canada, China, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Turkey, Switzerland and the USA</p> <p>(subject to dual or higher standard landing requirements – see above entries in table for additional or higher standard phytosanitary requirements for other pest risks from specific countries of origin)</p> | <p>Official statement (phytosanitary certificate) that the wood:</p> <p>(a) Originates in an area known to be free from <i>Anoplophora glabripennis</i> (Motschulsky); or</p> <p>(b) Wood is debarked and has undergone heat treatment (56° for 30 minutes throughout its core)</p> |

¹ The wood or its wrapping must be marked in the case of kiln drying “Kiln Dried” or “KD” or another internationally recognised mark and in the case of heat treatment “HT”. For kiln drying moisture content is expressed as a percentage of the dry matter achieved through an appropriate time/temperature schedule.

² Dual or higher standard landing requirements are necessary for the import of certain wood obtained from tree species which act as hosts for more than one tree pest. For example in Canada and the USA maple can be infected with both the fungal pathogen *Ceratocystis virescens* and Asian longhorn beetle (ALB). As kiln drying would not address the risk of maple wood infested with ALB, imported maple wood would have to be de-barked and heat treated as this higher standard addresses both pest risks (insect) and fungal. If the wood originated in an ALB pest-free area it could be declared as such and also kiln dried.

Section 2 - Consignments from within the EU

Although not subject to Customs formalities, regulated consignments meeting the prerequisite fuelwood 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 Europe are not currently present in GB. In such instances, all or parts of GB have 'Protected Zone' status in the EU, requiring special measures for the import of regulated material. Plant Passport controls involving supplier traceability currently apply to firewood 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 sweet chestnut and coniferous firewood from GB to other EU Protected Zones i.e. Greece, Ireland, Cyprus and other parts of the UK (Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Jersey), which are free of certain pests that are present in GB. For imports of regulated and non regulated wood see details of the Statutory Notification Scheme on page 1.

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

| Wood | Entry Requirement |
|--|--|
| All coniferous wood originating in EU members States except Portugal or other Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas (see sources of further information on page 7) | The wood must be bark-free, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has undergone kiln drying to below 20% moisture content and has a mark "Kiln Dried" or "KD" or another internationally recognised mark put on the wood or on its packaging, 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> |
| All coniferous wood originating in Portugal or other Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas (see sources of further information on page 7) | 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>) | The wood must be bark-free, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 and has a mark "Kiln Dried" or "KD" or another internationally recognised mark put on the wood or on its packaging |
| Plane (<i>Platanus L.</i>) | Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) originates in areas known to be free from <i>Ceratocystis platani</i> (the cause of Canker Stain of Plane), or (b) has undergone kiln drying to below 20% moisture content and has a mark "Kiln Dried" or "KD" or another internationally recognised mark put on the wood or on its packaging |

Note: if there is any doubt as to the genera or species of firewood at the time of import the consignment will be regarded as regulated. It is therefore important, especially for firewood 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. Information about updates to legislation can be obtained by subscribing to our free newsletter (plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk), or by checking the Plant Health web pages.

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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

