

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 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 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. 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 at www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth.

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 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's Edinburgh office at Silvan House.

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 Plant Health Leaflet No 2 "Fees for Plant Health Services") and, on satisfactory completion of inspection, a Certificate of Clearance 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 firewood within the EU must be accompanied by Plant Passports to confirm that they meet 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 firewood. Regulated firewood that 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.

The Plant Passport includes a unique number which may only be issued by a registered firewood 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 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. If moving regulated firewood, businesses will need to be authorised to issue Plant Passports to accompany consignments of firewood (unless it is bark free). A business will need to demonstrate that it can meet other countries' landing requirements before authorisation is granted. An inspection fee will be payable before the authority to issue Plant Passports is granted (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 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.

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</i> L., or <i>Taxus</i> L. 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, and Subsequent to its treatment the wood until leaving the country issuing that statement must be transported, outside of the flight season of the vector <i>Monochamus</i> ² , taking into account a safety margin of four additional weeks at the beginning and end of the expected flight season
Wood of <i>Thuja</i> L (western red cedar) or <i>Taxus</i> L. (Yew) ., originating in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA	Official statement that the wood: (a) is bark-free, or (b) has undergone heat treatment to achieve a minimum core temperature of 56°C for at least 30 minutes, or (c) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content ³
All coniferous wood, originating in Russia, Kazakhstan or Turkey	Official statement that the wood: (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) is bark-free and free from grub holes larger than 3mm across caused by the genus <i>Monochamus</i> spp. (non-European), 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
All coniferous wood, originating in third countries other than: - Russia, Kazakhstan or Turkey - European countries - Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan or the USA	Official statement that the wood: (a) is bark-free and free from grub holes larger than 3mm across caused by the genus <i>Monochamus</i> spp. (non-European), or (b) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20% moisture content, or (c) has undergone heat treatment 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 shall be accompanied by an official statement that it: (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 If bark-free it can be transported at any time provided a protective covering is used ensuring that infestation with *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (pinewood nematode) or its vector cannot occur

³ 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 firewood originating outside the EU

Species	Country of Origin	Entry Requirement
Birch (<i>Betula</i>)	Canada or the USA	Official statement that the wood: (a) has bark and at least 2.5 cm of the outer sapwood removed in an approved facility. (b) the wood has undergone ionizing irradiation to achieve a minimum absorbed dose of 1 kGy throughout the wood
Oak (<i>Quercus</i> L.)	USA	Official statement that the wood: (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) is bark-free and below 20 % moisture content, or (c) is bark-free and disinfected by an appropriate air or hot water treatment, or (d) is squared so as to remove entirely the rounded surface
Maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>) also known as hard maple, sugar maple or rock maple	Canada, USA	Official statement that the wood 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</i> L.)	Armenia, Switzerland or the USA	Official statement that the wood 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
Poplar/Aspen (<i>Populus</i> L.)	Any country in the American continent	Official statement that the wood: (a) is bark-free, 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, or
Ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> L.), Japanese walnut (<i>Juglans ailantifolia</i>), Manshurin 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 or the USA	Official statement that the wood: (a) has bark and at least 2.5 cm of the outer sapwood removed in an approved facility. (b) the wood has undergone ionizing irradiation to achieve a minimum absorbed dose of 1 kGy throughout the wood (c) originates in an area recognised (by the European Commission) as being free from <i>Agrilus planipennis</i> . The name of the area shall be marked on the Phytosanitary Certificate
Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea</i> L.)	All non-EU Countries except Switzerland	The wood shall be bark-free, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: (a) originates in an area or areas known to be free from <i>Cryphonectrica parasitica</i> (Murril.) Barr, 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

Section 2 - Consignments from within the EU

Although not subject to Customs formalities, regulated consignments meeting the solid 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 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 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 coniferous firewood 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 trader should a pest or pathogen problem be found when the material is received by the importer.

Table 3 - GB entry requirements for 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 below)	The wood shall be bark-free, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 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 below)	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
<i>Sweet chestnut (Castanea L.)</i>	The wood shall be bark-free, or Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> originates in an area known to be free from <i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i>. (the cause of Sweet Chestnut Blight), or has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content
<i>Plane (Platanus L.)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood originates in areas known to be free from <i>Ceratocystis fimbriata</i> f.sp. <i>platani</i> (the cause of Canker Stain of Plane), or There shall be evidence by a mark "Kiln Dried" or "KD" or another internationally recognised mark put on the wood or on its packaging, that it has undergone kiln drying to below 20% moisture content

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.

Sources of further information

For further advice on plant health controls, please consult the Forestry Commission's Plant Health Service (helpline; 0300 067 5155: e-mail; plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk). Web: www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth

A Forestry Commission guide to the import of Woodchips 'GB Woodchip Import Guide' can be found at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/hcou-4u5qcr>

Details of Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas within EU member states can be found at – http://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_health_biosafety/legislation/emergency_control_measures_en.htm