

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 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

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 Silvan House 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 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)

The movement of regulated firewood 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 that must be registered to Plant Passport firewood, not the importer. 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 should accompany the supply documentation or be incorporated into labels or delivery notes. It is the responsibility of the importer 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 export requirements 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 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 10 for solid fuel wood. This covers fuel wood in the form of logs, billets, twigs, faggots and similar forms. Reconstituted wood in pellets, briquettes, etc. is not regulated as the manufacturing process involving heat and pressure removes the plant health risk.

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

Material / Country of Origin	Entry Requirement
1 All coniferous wood, other than consignments comprised wholly of wood of <i>Thuja</i> L., originating in Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Taiwan and 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 (Appropriate to countries where Pine Wood Nematode occurs)
2 Wood of <i>Thuja</i> L (western red cedar), originating in Canada, China, Japan, 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 ²
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
4 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
5 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 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
Oak (<i>Quercus</i> L.)	USA	Official statement that the wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content, 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
Plane (<i>Platanus</i> L.)	All non-EU countries	(a) The wood shall be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate or a phytosanitary certificate for re-export which includes under the heading "Additional declaration" an official statement that it originates in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a place of production in a country in which <i>Ceratocystis fimbriata</i> f. spp. <i>platani</i> Walter is known not to occur; or (ii) an area established and maintained as an area free from <i>Ceratocystis fimbriata</i> f. spp. <i>platani</i> Walter in accordance with ISPM No 4; 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 wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is bark-free, or (b) has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content
Ash (<i>Fraxinus</i> L.), Manshurin Walnut (<i>Juglans mandshurica</i>), David Elm (<i>Ulmus davidiana</i>), Chinese or Lace Bark Elm (<i>U. parvifolia</i>) and Japanese Wingnut (<i>Pterocarya rhoifolia</i>)	Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Russia, Taiwan and the USA	Official statement that the wood: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) originates in areas known to be free from the Emerald Ash Borer (<i>Agrilus planipennis</i>), or (b) is squared so as to remove entirely the rounded surface
Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea</i> L.)	All non-EU Countries	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) 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 solid fuel wood 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	The wood shall be bark-free, 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 originating in Portugal or other Pine Wood Nematode demarcated areas	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: (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
<i>Plane (Platanus L.)</i>	Official statement (Plant Passport) confirming that the wood: (a) 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 (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 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

www.forestry.gov.uk/planthealth

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).

A Forestry Commission guide to: [Plant health import controls for wood-based biofuel products entering Great Britain](#), is also available.