



# Defra outlines plant passport changes after no-deal Brexit scenario

24 September 2018, by Matthew Appleby

A Defra notice has set out how plant trade with the EU and the rest of the world would be affected after a no-deal Brexit in March 2019.



Image: Flickr/Eoghan-O'Lionnain (CC by 2.0)

Defra said "plants and plant products managed under the EU plant passport regime would be subject to UK import controls to replace the EU plant passport regime".

Defra added: "In the unlikely event of a 'no-deal' scenario", there would be a new UK plant passport regime, replacing EU plant passports when moved within the UK. Businesses moving plants within the UK would need to be authorised by the relevant UK plant

health authority to issue UK plant passports and would need to issue plant passports when moving those plants and plant products within the UK."

At present there are no border controls on most imports and exports of plants and plant products [between the UK and the EU](#). In a 'no deal' scenario the Government has decided that the majority of plants and plant products are low-risk and should continue to enter the UK from the EU freely. But some plants present a higher biosecurity risk are managed under the EU plant passport regime.

For trade with third countries, some plants with no biosecurity risk can move freely. Other 'controlled' plants and plant products, must meet import requirements because they are plant health risks. The importing country decides which plants are controlled and must travel with a phytosanitary certificate issued by APHA, which also enforces import controls and phytosanitary certificates for export from the UK.

The UK would need to be approved by the EU as an exporter – a process which could take a minimum of six months, which the NFU says would be "catastrophic" and emphasises the need for a deal and not a 'cliff edge' scenario.

The British Retail Consortium said the collection of no-deal scenario notices issued at the same time as the plant notice, for food and animal export and imports "lay bare the realities of a no-deal Brexit - more delays, extra costs and an explosion of red tape".

Consignments of these plants and plant products entering the UK would require a phytosanitary certificate issued in the country of export (or re-export), and the importer or the importer's agent would need to inform the relevant plant health authority in the UK before the consignment arrived. The importer or agent would also need to provide scanned copies of the certificate and relevant documents in advance to the relevant UK plant health authority, and supply the original copy of the certificate once the consignment has arrived.

Defra said: "Consignments of plants and plant products from EU countries would not be stopped at the border. The relevant UK plant health authority would carry out documentary and identity checks remotely. These checks would be charged for by the plant health authority."

Plant health inspectors would continue to carry out follow-up inspections inland on a risk-targeted basis. The Government does not charge for such inspections.

Plants and plant products that come from non-EU countries, but travel to the UK via the EU without an EU member state carrying out plant health checks, would be treated as non-EU imports and subject to third country controls on arrival in the UK.