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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department  
National Assembly for Wales

## PLANT HEALTH

The Plant Health (England) Order 2005

The Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (as amended)

# Explanatory Leaflet on Importing Invertebrate Plant Pests

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1. There are many plant pests and diseases around the world which, if they were to become established in Great Britain, could cause serious damage to our crops and other plants. To guard against the spread of harmful organisms official controls apply to the import, movement and keeping of plants, plant pests\* and other material. These controls, the purpose of which is to protect plant health, are laid down in respect of England in the Plant Health (England) Order 2005 and, in respect of Wales and Scotland in the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (as amended).

*\*'Plant pest' means any living organism, other than a vertebrate animal, in any stage of its existence which is injurious or likely to be injurious to any plant or plant product.*

2. This leaflet provides guidance on the requirements and restrictions applying to the import of **invertebrate plant pests**. If you are in doubt or require more information please contact the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) at the following address:

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs,  
Plant Health Division,  
Room 340, Foss House,  
Kings Pool,  
1-2 Peasholme Green,  
York YO1 2PX  
Tel: 01904 455191/455192/455885  
Fax: 01904 455199

For enquiries in Scotland contact the Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) at the following address:

Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (SASA),  
Craigs Road,  
Edinburgh EH12 8NJ  
Tel: 0131 244 8937  
Fax: 0131 244 8940

3. The requirements and restrictions applying to forest trees, wood and bark are prescribed in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005. If you require more information please contact the Forestry Commission (FC) at the following address:

The Forestry Commission,  
Plant Health Service,  
231 Corstorphine Road,  
Edinburgh EH12 7AT  
Tel: 0131 314 6549  
Fax: 0131 314 6148

4. **Compliance with plant health legislation does not relieve importers from obligations imposed by other Regulations and requirements. It is the responsibility of importers to ensure that they comply with any other relevant restrictions and requirements.** For example, there are restrictions and prohibitions on the import of some species of invertebrates which are considered endangered and a prohibition on release of non-native invertebrates. For more information see Section A.
5. **This leaflet is intended as a general guide only. If you are in doubt or require more information about importing invertebrate plant pests please contact Defra, SEERAD or FC as appropriate.**

## Section A

### Prohibited invertebrate plant pests

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#### ■ Which invertebrates cannot be imported?

1. Any plant-feeding invertebrate which is:
  - (a) not normally present in Great Britain; and
  - (b) likely to have potential to damage plants, including forest and amenity trees, in Great Britain.

#### ■ Is there a definitive list of prohibited invertebrates?

2. No. It is not possible to list every invertebrate that falls within the above criteria. However, some examples of invertebrate plant pests which must not be imported are provided at Appendix A. If in doubt please contact Defra, SEERAD or FC before import.

#### ■ What other restrictions are there?

3. Plant health controls also apply to the import of certain plants, parts of plants and plant material. While many species of invertebrates may be freely imported, their host-plants may be subject to restrictions. Defra, SEERAD or FC should be contacted before import. If at all possible invertebrates should be imported without any associated plant material.
4. Plant health controls also extend to the movement and keeping of invertebrate plant pests within Great Britain. It is an offence in England under the Plant Health (England) Order 2005 and, in Wales and Scotland under the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (as amended) to knowingly keep, release, sell, exchange or give away any live invertebrate that is considered to be a plant pest.
5. The Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2000 are designed to ensure the safe use and handling of genetically modified organisms, including invertebrate plant pests, under containment. They require, with certain exceptions, that anyone carrying out any activity involving genetic modification does so in conditions of contained use which satisfy the Regulations. For more information contact the Health and Safety Executive – see Appendix C.

6. The Genetically Modified Organisms (Deliberate Release) Regulations 2002 control the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms. For more information contact Defra – see Appendix C.
7. Details of animals and plants protected by endangered species legislation (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)) can be obtained from Defra – see Appendix C. This legislation currently includes several species of invertebrates.
8. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 prohibits the release into the wild of **any** animal (including invertebrates) which is not normally resident in Great Britain. This means that while you may import some non-resident species **you must not release them**. For more information contact Defra – see Appendix C.

#### ■ Are there any exceptions allowed to the prohibition?

9. Yes. Licences may be granted authorising the import and keeping of prohibited invertebrate plant pests for scientific purposes. For more information contact Defra, SEERAD or FC.
10. Defra may also issue licences for protected, threatened, vulnerable or endangered species and they also have responsibility for implementing the Dangerous Wild Animals Act which may be relevant to some invertebrates. For more information contact Defra, Global Wildlife Division – see Appendix C.

## Section B

# Invertebrates not covered by plant health restrictions

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1. There are currently no plant health restrictions on importing into Great Britain:
  - (a) **dead invertebrates** (some are controlled under Endangered Species legislation. These include the butterfly *Parnassius apollo* and butterflies of the genus *Bhutanitis*, *Ornithoptera*, *Trogonoptera* and *Troides*. For more information contact Defra, Global Wildlife Division – see Appendix C);
  - (b) **any live terrestrial invertebrate that does not feed on plants** e.g. mantids, spiders, scorpions and other predatory or parasitic species. However, *Pandinus dictator* (Scorpion), *Pandinus gambiensis* (Giant Senegalese scorpion), *Pandinus imperator* (Emperor scorpion) and *Brachypelma* spp. (Tarantulas) are controlled under Endangered Species legislation. The following invertebrates require a licence under the provisions of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (as amended) when kept privately:
    - Atrax* spp.  
(Sydney funnel web spiders and close relatives)
    - Buthidae*  
(Scorpions)
    - Latrodectus* spp.  
(Black widow spiders and close relatives)
    - Loxosceles* spp.  
(Brown recluse spiders)
    - Lycosa raptoria*  
(Brazilian Wolf spider)
    - Phoneutria* (Wandering spiders)The release or escape of *Arthurdendyus triangulatus* (New Zealand flatworm) is prohibited under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
  - (c) **any marine or freshwater invertebrate** (some are controlled under Endangered Species legislation. Enquiries should be made to Defra, Global Wildlife Division);
  - (d) **live specimens of plant-feeding invertebrate species** listed at Appendix B.

# Appendix A

## Invertebrates that MUST NOT be imported live

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In general, you must not import non-indigenous or pesticide-resistant strains of plant feeding invertebrate species of the following groups at any stage of their development without prior consultation with Defra, SEERAD or FC, as appropriate. These and many other species must not be imported or kept without a licence and some must not be imported at all.

### 1. Insects

- **Coleoptera** – Beetles, Weevils
- **Diptera** (except *Drosophila* and *Cyrtodiopsis* spp) – True flies
- **Heteroptera** – Bugs
- **Homoptera** – Aphids, Whiteflies, Scale insects, Mealybugs, Leafhoppers, etc.
- **Hymenoptera** (except *Atta* spp) – Ants, Bees\*, Sawflies, Gallwasps  
(\* Bees of the genus *Apis* are also restricted by the Importation of Bees Order 1997 – see Appendix C.)

- The following groups of **Lepidoptera** – Butterflies, Moths:

*Anisota senatoria*  
Arctiidae (Tiger and Ermine Moths)  
Blastobasidae  
Cochylidae (Cochylid Moths)  
Coleophoridae  
*Dryocampa rubicunda*  
Gelechiidae  
Gracillariidae  
Hepialidae (Swift Moths)  
*Holocerina smilax*  
Incurvariidae

*Lapara bombycoides*  
Lasiocampidae (Eggar Moths)  
Lymantriidae  
Lyonetiidae  
Momphidae  
Nepticulidae  
Noctuidae (Noctuid Moths)  
Oecophoridae  
Pyralidae (Pyralid Moths)  
Sesiidae (Clearwing Moths)  
Sphingidae  
Thaumetopoeidae (Pine/Oak Processionary Moths)  
Tischeriidae  
Tortricidae (Tortrix Moths)  
Yponomeutidae (Small Ermine moths)

- **Thysanoptera** (Thrips)

### 2. Other invertebrates (plant-feeding species only)

- Millipedes
- Mites
- Molluscs (except *Achatina achatina*, *A. fulica*)
- Nematodes

**If in doubt please contact Defra, SEERAD or FC, as appropriate, before import.**

# Appendix B

## Invertebrate plant pests that may be imported live

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1. The list below is revised regularly. It may be necessary, in the light of new knowledge, to prohibit the import of previously “non-restricted” species.
2. The list refers only to invertebrates imported in isolation. If imported in association with plants, parts of plants or plant material further restrictions may apply. Please check with Defra, SEERAD or FC, as appropriate, before importing.
3. **You may import, keep, sell, exchange or give away but MUST NOT RELEASE any of the following plant feeding insects:**
  - **Dictyoptera** (Cockroaches) – but note that several species of these could become pests in warm houses
  - **Isoptera** (Termites)
  - **Lepidoptera** – Rhopalocera (Butterflies) (**N.B.** *Papilio machaon* is protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and other butterflies are controlled under Endangered Species legislation.)
  - **Orthoptera** (Grasshoppers, Locusts, Crickets, Mantids, etc.) – European tropical and sub-tropical species only (areas between 40 N and 30 S)
  - **Phasmida** (Stick and Leaf Insects)
4. **With the exception of any species or families listed in Appendix A, you may import, keep, sell, exchange or give away the following:**
  - Saturniidae (Silkmoths)
  - Moths confined to the tropics or sub-tropics (areas between 40 N and 30 S)
  - Other moths from temperate areas **may be imported**, but any non-indigenous species must not be bred, sold, exchanged or given away without prior consultation with Defra, SEERAD or FC, as appropriate

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 prohibits the release into the wild of any animal (including those listed above) which is not normally resident in Great Britain. This means that while you may import, keep, sell, exchange or give away these non-resident species **you must not release them**. For more information contact Defra, Global Wildlife Division – see Appendix C.

**Remember some alien invertebrates can endanger growing crops or harm humans.**

5. If you bring back any live invertebrates from abroad or are sent them from overseas, a potential plant pest may inadvertently be included amongst them. A few simple precautions will help to prevent escapes:
  - (a) make sure that your cages are proof against escapes for all sizes of invertebrates that they may contain;
  - (b) when clearing out make sure that no live invertebrates are thrown away with waste food plants or other debris. It is a sensible precaution to bag up such debris and burn, freeze or crush it before disposal; and
  - (c) make sure that anyone allowed access to the invertebrates is aware of the dangers of escape.

# Appendix C

## Legislation and contacts

The following information  
is correct as at March 2003.

- 1. The Plant Health (England) Order 2005 and the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (as amended)**

*Enquiries for England and Wales to:*  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)  
Plant Health Division, Room 340,  
Foss House, Kings Pool,  
1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 2PX  
Tel: 01904 455191/455192/455962  
Fax: 01904 455199  
E-mail: planthealth.info@defra.gsi.gov.uk

*Enquiries for Scotland to:*  
Scottish Agricultural Science Agency,  
Craigs Road, Edinburgh, EH12 8NJ  
Tel: 0131 244 8937  
Fax: 0131 244 8940
- 2. The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005**

*Enquiries to:*  
The Forestry Commission,  
Plant Health Service,  
231 Corstorphine Road,  
Edinburgh, EH12 7AT  
Tel: 0131 314 6549  
Fax: 0131 314 6148  
E-mail: plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
- 3. Endangered Species Legislation (CITES)**

*Enquiries to:*  
Defra,  
Global Wildlife Division,  
First Floor Temple Quay House,  
2, The Square,  
Temple Quay,  
Bristol, BS1 6EB  
Tel: 0117 3728168  
Fax: 0117 3728206  
E-mail: citesukma@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- 4. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981**

*Enquiries to:*  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (address at 3 above)  
Tel: 0117 3728503  
Fax: 0117 3728182  
E-mail: global.wildlife@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- 5. Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (as amended)**

*Enquiries to:*  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (address at 3 opposite)  
Tel: 0117 3728503  
Fax: 0117 3728182  
E-mail: exoticzoos@defra.gsi.gov.uk
- 6. The Importation of Bees Order 1997**

*Enquiries for England and Wales to:*  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Horticulture and Potatoes Division,  
Eastbury House, 30/34 Albert Embankment,  
London, SE1 7TL  
Tel: 0171 238 1047  
Fax: 0171 238 1040

*Enquiries for Scotland to:*  
Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs  
Department,  
Division A2,  
Room 353, Pentland House,  
47 Robb's Loan, Edinburgh EH14 1TY  
Tel: 0131 244 6177  
Fax: 0131 244 6616
- 7. The Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2000**

*Enquiries to:*  
Health and Safety Executive,  
Health Directorate B2, Floor 7SW,  
Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge,  
London SE1 9HB  
Tel: 0171 717 6348  
Fax: 0171 717 6199
- 8. The Genetically Modified Organisms (Deliberate Release) Regulations 2002**

*Enquiries to:*  
Department for Environment,  
Food and Rural Affairs,  
Chemical and Genetic Modification  
GM Policy Unit,  
Room 3/G9, Ashdown House,  
123 Victoria Street,  
London, SW1E 6DE  
Tel: 0207 944 5248 Fax: 0207 944 5259  
E-mail: biotech@defra.gsi.gov.uk