



TRADER NOTICE FH10/2020

8 May 2020

New Plant Health Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 and Official Controls Regulation EU 2017/625

Suppliers and Importers of Fuel Wood - Firewood, Kindling, Wood Chip

Dear Trader,

This notice concerns the new EU Plant Health Regulation in relation to suppliers and importers of Fuel Wood (firewood, kindling, wood chip)

A. Background

In relation to pests and diseases you may be aware that the new Plant Health Regulation EU 2016/2031 and the Official Controls Regulation EU 2017/625 came into effect from the 14th December 2019. Regulation EU 2016/2031 has replaced the previous Council Directive 2000/29/EC (commonly referred to as the Plant Health Directive) and will in summary modernise the plant health regime **and will provide more proactive and effective measures for the protection of the EU's and Ireland's plants and forests from destructive pests and diseases**. Specific measures are included for Ireland. More detailed information on the new Regulation is available on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) website www.agriculture.gov.ie or directly from the weblinks below which summarise the main provisions of the new Plant Health Regulation under various headings including 'Frequently Asked Questions' sections. You are encouraged to refer to these information links which will be kept updated.

Forestry overview: <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests/newplanthealthregulations/> (includes other related forestry 'Trader Notices')

Horticulture and the wider new legislative requirements: <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/farmingsectors/planthealthtrade/newplanthealthregulations/>

Please note that while most of the specific requirements of the new Regulation (as outlined below) are clearly defined, other requirements are still subject to discussion by the European Commission and the Member States. In this regard DAFM will update and facilitate you in due course.

B. The new Plant Health Regulation in relation to Fuel wood (firewood, kindling, wood chip, excluding industrial wood pellets)

- Professional Operator:** An important feature of the new legislation is a 'Professional Operator'. You are a Professional Operator if you are involved professionally in one or more of the following activities concerning plants, plant products and other objects: Planting; Breeding; Production including growing, multiplying and maintaining; Introduction into, and movement within and out of the EU territory; Making available on the market; Storage, procession, dispatching and processing.
- Obligations to register as a Professional Operator:** Fuel wood is a plant product ('fuel wood' is a legislative/Customs term and is equivalent to 'wood fuel'). In this regard if you are a supplier of certain species of fuel wood, you are required to register with DAFM for plant health purposes to become approved as a 'Professional Operator'. Retail outlets and internet traders supplying fuel wood (and other regulated plants and plant products) are included in the requirement to register.
- Fuel wood species regulated:** Within Ireland you are required to register if you supply fuel wood of any conifer (Pinales) species that is not bark free, *Castanea* species that is not bark free, and fuel wood in general of *Platanus*, *Juglans* and *Pterocarya* species.
- Obligations of a Professional Operator:** As a 'Professional Operator' the following obligations apply (refer also to the above web link):
 - The above regulated fuel wood species require a Plant Passport when moved from one Professional Operator to another Professional Operator.
 - With regard to Ireland specifically (and for supply to certain other Member States), all conifer fuel wood and *Castanea* (Spanish chestnut) wood with bark attached, moving into Ireland from other EU countries **or within Ireland** now requires a valid Plant Passport **to the final end user (the public)**. See examples of Plant Passports on third information link above. **This means in practice that in any retail outlet, each trading unit whether it is an individual bulk unit or an individual netted bag of firewood or kindling must have a valid Plant Passport attached incorporating the supplier's unique registration number etc.** This is a significant new traceability requirement under the legislation. [These traceability requirements for conifer and *Castanea* wood are required under the legislation in order for Ireland to maintain its EU 'Protected Zone' status for a range of very damaging conifer bark beetle species and Chestnut blight disease which are present in other parts of the EU and which could seriously damage our forests.]
 - Professional Operators must maintain records for fuel wood supplied by them to other professional operators and also for fuel wood supplied by other Professional Operators to them for at least 3 years.
 - Professional Operators should also have in place systems and procedures to allow identification of the movements of fuel wood between their own premises.
 - Each authorized Professional Operator issuing Plant Passports must nominate a competent person to be available to liaise with DAFM (this specific requirement of nominating a competent person will not apply until 14 December 2020).
- Importation of fuel wood from non-EU countries:** If you import from non-EU countries firewood, kindling, wood chip etc you will continue to be required to register as an importer. Depending on the wood species you will be advised of any special requirements, including the requirement for a Phytosanitary Certificate. [There is increased concern about the importation of ash firewood due to the threat posed by emerald ash borer.]

C. First Step to be taken under the new Regulation – Apply for Registration as a 'Professional Operator'

- Please complete a registration form (attached or download on the above 'Forestry Overview link') and return to fuelwood@agriculture.gov.ie. Following processing of your registration application, DAFM will guide you and be available to advise you on the specific new requirements.
- You may already be registered for Plant Health under the outgoing Plant Health Directive 2000/29/EC, if so, you will retain your existing registration number however the registration form should still be completed and returned, including your current registration number
- Under the new Plant Health Regulation you may also be applying, or have applied, for plant health registration as advised by other DAFM 'Trader Notices', such as Timber Importer, ISPM 15 (wood packaging material), Wood Processor, Forest Manager, Forest Plant/Seed supplier. If this is the case, you will be supplied with a single plant health registration number. See other Trader Notices in forestry link above.

In the coming months DAFM, will facilitate registered 'Professional Operators' in becoming familiar with the new Regulation and complying with its requirements. Please forward any queries on the above to: fuelwood@agriculture.gov.ie

Regards,
Gerard Cahalane,
Forestry Inspector,
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