



17th November, 2023

Circular 25/2023

To all Registered Foresters and other Stakeholders

Native Woodland Creation and Oak

The following change applies to the native woodland-related Forest Types (FTs) under the Afforestation Scheme (i.e. Forest Types 1, 2, 3 and 5) and to the Native Tree Area Scheme, due to the limited availability of suitable oak material derived from suitable sources within Ireland.

For the remainder of the current 2023 / 2024 planting season only, sessile and pedunculate oak from the following seed origins / provenances can, in general, be used under the above Forest Types, following the order of preference set out below. (This order of preference reflects good practice in terms of selecting material from acceptable seed origins that are as close as possible to Ireland and maritime in nature.)

Sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) and Pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	1st preference: Native oak material derived from suitable sources within the island of Ireland – please refer to Table 1 (page 7) of the previous DAFM document <i>Native Woodland Establishment GPC9 and GPC10: Silvicultural Standards (September 2015)</i> .
	2nd preference: Registered Great Britain (English and Welsh) seed sources in the categories ‘Selected’, ‘Qualified’ or ‘Tested’ and with ‘origins’ in these regions. <u>Important: Please note that the importation of oak plants from Great Britain is prohibited.</u> <u>See footnote below regarding import regulations.</u>
	3rd and final preference: Registered Belgian, Netherlands, Danish or French (north of Paris) seed sources in the categories ‘Selected’, ‘Qualified’ or ‘Tested’ and with ‘origins’ in these regions. <u>See footnote below regarding the sourcing oak plants within the EU.</u>
Footnotes:	

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Regulatory requirements concerning imports of oak plants and seed from GB

- The importation from Great Britain of oak **plants** (and plants of many other tree species) into Ireland and into the rest of the EU is **prohibited**. Hence the above second-best alternative seed origins / provenance choice of registered Great Britain (English and Welsh) specified seed sources only applies to such plants already in production in Irish or other EU nurseries.
- Seed imports of oak from GB are permitted. All seed imports from Great Britain for forestry purposes, including oak, must be accompanied by an 'OECD Forest Seed and Plant Scheme' Certificate of Provenance issued by the UK authorities. Seed imported from Great Britain must also be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate and the importer must be registered with DAFM as a 'Professional Operator'. Importers of seed from Great Britain must also be separately registered under the EU Forest Reproductive Material (FRM) regulations.

Regulatory requirements regarding sourcing oak plants within the EU

- With regard to the amenity sector, Quercus with a girth of at least 8 cm measured at 1.2 m above the root collar cannot be imported to Ireland from other Member States. Quercus plants under 1.2 m at the root collar and / or under 8 cm girth can still be imported from other Member States, if accompanied by a Plant Passport compliant with the EU Plant Health Regulation and a Suppliers Document compliant with the EU FRM Directive.
- Furthermore, under new EU-based plant health regulations concerning the threat of oak processionary moth, if oak plants are delivered from another Member State, the Department must be notified in writing as soon as practicable but no later than 48 hours after arrival in the State.
- Suppliers of Irish and EU sourced FRM must be registered under the EU Plant Health and FRM regulations.
- Further information can be obtained from frm@agriculture.gov.ie

Furthermore, in the case of projects within an area designated for conservation purposes under European and / or national legislation, the designation of which is based *inter alia* on native woodland habitat, sessile and pedunculate oak must originate from reproductive material collected from within that area or the vicinity, or from an alternative site acceptable to both DAFM and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

This amendment applies to sessile and pedunculate oak only and to the remainder of the 2023 / 2024 planting season only. The requirement for native material derived from suitable sources within Ireland remains in place for all other species planted under the native woodland-related Forest Types under the Afforestation Scheme, and under the Native Tree Area Scheme. These requirements are as set out in the previous DAFM document *Native Woodland Establishment GPC9 and GPC10: Silvicultural Standards (September 2015)*.



The above amendment will be kept under review by the DAFM, particularly in relation to the 2023 / 2024 planting season.

Joanne Adams

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