Corporate report: Government Office for Science annual report: 2014 to 2015

Information on the performance of the Government Office for Science for 2014 to 2015.

Collection: Household Energy Efficiency National Statistics

Updated: Household energy efficiency statistics October 2018 published.

This series presents statistics on the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Green Deal (GD). It incorporates changes as set out in response to the user consultation of National Statistics on the Green Deal, Energy Company Obligation and Insulation statistics. The headline releases present monthly updates of ECO measures and quarterly updates of in-depth ECO statistics, carbon savings and the Green Deal schemes. The detailed report presents annual updates on in-depth Green Deal statistics and insulation levels.

Historical releases are available on the National Archives.

Official Statistics: Key historical changes

Updated: Added statistical notice on changes in January 2018.

This section documents significant changes to the statistics either as a result of changes to the underlying administrative data system or changes made following user feedback.

Detailed guide: Protecting plant health: topical issues

Updated: List of host plants susceptible to Xylella fastidiosa in the EU updated

Oak processionary moth (Thaumetopoea processionea)

This section was updated on 21 August 2018.

Defra has introduced legislation, which came into force on Tuesday 21 August 2018, to protect oak trees against the imminent danger of introducing Thaumetopoea processionea (oak processionary moth-OPM) into the OPM Protected Zone through import and movement – http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/910/contents/made.

Operational guidance of Statutory Instrument 2018/910
(PDF, 90.8KB, 3 pages)

has now been published.

The legislation applies to oak trees (Quercus L), other than Q. suber, with a girth at 1.2m above the root collar of 8cm or more. Such trees represent the greatest likelihood of introducing OPM, hence the need for strengthened requirements. Existing requirements on OPM freedom continue to apply for trees with a smaller girth than 8cm.

The legislation prohibits the movement of plants into the OPM protected zone unless specific conditions are met. The legislation requires that imports into and movements within the OPM protected zone can only take place if the oak trees concerned:

- have been grown throughout their life in places of production in countries in which Thaumetopoea processionea L. is not known to occur
- have been grown throughout their life in a protected zone which is recognised as such for Thaumetopoea processionea L. or in an area free from Thaumetopoea processionea L., established by the national plant protection organisation in accordance with ISPM No. 4
- have been produced in nurseries which, along with their vicinity, have been found free from Thaumetopoea processionea L. on the basis of official inspections carried out as close as practically possible to their movement and official surveys of the nurseries and their vicinity have been carried out at appropriate times since the beginning of the last complete cycle of vegetation to detect larvae and other symptoms of Thaumetopoea processionea L. or
- have been grown throughout their life in a site with complete physical protection against the introduction of Thaumetopoea processionea L. and

have been inspected at appropriate times and found to be free

The action has been taken following a recent interception in trade of OPM.

OPM caterpillars cause significant damage to oak trees and can pose risks to human and animal health. The Forestry Commission has operated an OPM Control Programme since 2013. As part of this Defra has set policies and control restrictions on the import and movement of oak trees to limit the spread of OPM.

OPM is an established pest in London and surrounding areas, but the majority of the UK is designated a Protected Zone and we have strengthened protection to mitigate the risk of introducing OPM into the UK OPM Protected Zone.

Maize, sweetcorn and aubergines (additional species): phytosanitary certificates required

This section was added on 21 May 2018.

A new Commission Implementing Decision 2018/638 has been published establishing emergency measures to prevent the introduction into and spread within the EU of the harmful organism Spodoptera frugiperda (the fall armyworm).

This pest originated in the Americas and has become a major pest in parts of Africa.

The measures involve new requirements for Capsicum, Momordica and Solanum melongena and extends import controls to fruits of Solanum aethiopicum L., Solanum macrocarpon L. (both types of aubergine), and plants other than live pollen, plant tissue cultures, seeds and grains, of Zea mays (maize and sweetcorn) originating in Africa or in the Americas.

From 1 June 2018, a phytosanitary certificate will be required and advanced notification on PEACH to import this material from these countries.

Xylella fastidiosa: EU controls

This section was updated on 8 August 2018.

Xylella fastidiosa, a bacterial disease, represents a serious threat to plants in the UK. We are working to stop the spread of this disease and plant health authorities in the UK and elsewhere are keeping a close watch for it

Xylella has not yet been found in the UK, but it has recently affected olive trees in Italy, and a range of trees and plants in areas of Spain and France. Plants in North and South America are being damaged by the disease.

Everyone in a horticultural business, or who moves or imports affected plants, must comply with strict conditions imposed under EU legislation. These affect ‘specified plants’ (which includes the confirmed hosts of Xylella fastidiosa in the EU and further afield). There are:

- controls on importing these plants into Europe from non-EU countries
- controls on moving these plants from those parts of the EU where it is has been detected
- new requirements for all ‘host plants’ being moved between businesses to be from premises that are officially inspected on an annual basis, with testing of symptomatic plants, in addition to being accompanied by a plant passport
- extra requirements, from 1 March 2018, for a sub-set of ‘host plants’ to be from officially inspected sites and systematically tested using a statistically based sampling system, irrespective of whether they show symptoms – these include Coffea, Lavandula dentata, Nerium oleander, Olea europaea, Polygala myrtifolia and Prunus dulcis

Find out more about the controls:

- Information about Xylella controls for importers and users of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants
  (PDF, 556KB, 9 pages)

- Host plants susceptible to Xylella fastidiosa in the EU (list) (PDF)
- Areas in France (including Corsica), Italy and Spain demarcated because of the disease (PDF)
- Plant passports: application form, and consolidated list of plants susceptible to Xylella fastidiosa which require a plant passport

- Letter of 8 September 2017 from Nicola Spence (Chief Plant Health Officer) to horticulture industry about Xylella fastidiosa
  (PDF, 192KB, 2 pages)

- Letter of 7 September 2017 from Michael Gove, Secretary of State to Commissioner Aandriukaitis about Xylella fastidiosa
  (PDF, 167KB, 1 page)

- Press release, 20 October 2017: Xylella fastidiosa: UK secures added EU protections
- EU Decision 2015/789 from May 2015 (measures to control Xylella fastidiosa) has been amended by Decision 2015/2417 (December 2015)

Capsicum, aubergines and citrus: additional declaration changes

This section was added on 11 January 2018.

All importers of fresh fruit and vegetables should be aware that EU Directive 2017/1279 has been published. This amends the EU Plant Health Directive 2000/29/EC and requires new additional declarations for:

- capsicum, citrus (other than citrus limon and citrus aurantiifolia), peaches and pomegranates originating in countries of the African continent, Cape Verde, Saint Helena, Madagascar, La Reunion, Mauritius and Israel (Annex 4 item 16.6)
- tomato and aubergine (Annex 4 item 25.7.2)

See the Directive amendment for further detail.

Tomatoes and pomegranates: phytosanitary certificates

This section was updated on 23 January 2018.

All importers of fresh fruit and vegetables should be aware that EU Directive 2017/1279 has been published. This amends the EU Plant Health Directive 2000/29/EC and will require tomatoes originating from all third countries (outside the EU but including Canary Islands, Ceuta, Melilla and the French Overseas Departments) and pomegranates originating from countries of the African continent, Cape Verde, Saint Helena, Madagascar, La Reunion, Mauritius and Israel to be imported with a phytosanitary certificate.

As an interim measure, while the Procedure for Electronic Application for Certificates (PEACH) online system is amended to accommodate this change, phytosanitary certificates for tomatoes and pomegranates should be emailed to Phyto-Heathrow@apha.gsi.gov.uk. Notifications to the Horticultural Marketing Inspectorate (HMI) , through PEACH should continue as normal.

From 8 February 2018, importers should make entries for this material on PEACH and upload copies of the physanitary certificates that accompany the applications. This will be in line with the process for other controlled commodities.

This Directive has been introduced with a view to protecting plants, plant products and other objects, in light of increased international trade and following pest risk assessments published by the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation. These risk assessments provided justification for adding tomatoes and pomegranates to the list of controlled material in Annex 5B (regulated material requiring a phytosanitary certificate) of Directive 2000/29/EC following the addition of 3 new harmful organisms to those listed in Annex 1 (prohibited pests):

- Keiferia lycopersicella (tomato pinworm), a leaf mining moth
- Thaumatotiba leucotreta (false codling month)
- Bactericera cockerelli (tomato/potato psyllid), a vector for Candidatus liberibacter solanacearum, the causal agent of ‘Zebra Chip’, a serious disease in potatoes

Red palm weevil

We are appealing for palm growers, importers and retailers to be on the lookout for the red palm weevil, a threat to palm trees, which was identified

in the UK for the first time in October 2016. It was found inside a round-leaf fountain palm imported from Italy, which had been purchased in Essex. The infested plant was destroyed.

APHA inspectors have surveyed susceptible palm trees within 10km of the affected tree and found no further signs of it. Tracing work has been carried out to locate and inspect material which was sent to other retailers and no further finds have been made to date.

We are appealing to the trade to look out for signs of the red palm weevil over the coming months and to source material carefully to avoid importing unwanted pests such as this into the UK.

The red palm weevil does not pose any risk to people, pets or livestock but is known to attack and kill a large range of palm species popular in the UK. The pest is native to Asia but was accidently introduced to Spain in 1994 and since then it has spread widely in the Mediterranean region where it has devastated ornamental palms, particularly the Canary Island date palm. It is known to affect palm species including Butia, Chamaerops, Phoenix, Saribus (=Livistona) Trachycarpus and Washingtonia

Weevils do not survive the winter however the larvae can. Larvae are legless, about 50 mm long, with a creamy-white body and reddish-brown head. Adult weevils are not expected to emerge until June. They are about 35mm long, with a characteristic long curved extension to the front of the head called a rostrum.

Larvae complete their lifecycle inside the palm, forming galleries as they tunnel their way through the trunk and bases of palm fronds. Adult beetles are most likely to be seen in the UK from June-September when summer temperatures are highest.

Larvae, pupae, pupal cases, and adults, can be found in the dead or dying crown of the palm or infested fronds. In heavily infested palms fallen empty pupal cases and dead adults may be found around the base of the palm. Early infestations or low numbers of the weevil in plants are very difficult to detect. The older leaves of a palm begin to droop during the early stages of infestation but quickly collapse. Later stages or large infestations cause a decreased size and yellowing of the frond, particularly the new fronds as the larvae destroy the growing point of the palm. Eventually the frond canopy becomes very small and distorted relative to the trunk and the crown dies.

Suspect findings of the red palm weevil should be reported to APHA’s Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate by telephone 01904 405138 or by email planthealth.info@apha.gsi.gov.uk.

The government is committed to doing everything possible to prevent plant pests and diseases crossing our borders and, although we cannot eliminate all risks, we have stringent plans to deal with threats and take prompt action when they are detected. The government continues to work closely with the international community, industry, NGOs, landowners and the public to reduce the risks of pests and diseases entering the country, and to mitigate the

impact of newly established ones.

Sweet chestnut blight (Cryphonectria parasitica)

This section was updated on 27 March 2018.

Since sweet chestnut blight was confirmed in trees in 2016, there have been cases at:

- 8 sites in Devon
- 1 site in Dorset
- 8 sites in East London
- 1 site in Berkshire
- 3 sites in Derbyshire
- 1 site in Leicestershire

In all cases action was taken to limit spread of the disease from sites and determine its local distribution.

Further action will be taken on the basis of surveillance information and the best available scientific evidence. Local businesses or woodland owners and managers needing further information can contact their Forestry Commission Area office.

Following the outbreak in Devon in December 2016, a prohibition was imposed on the movement of oak and sweet chestnut material, including plants, logs, bark, branches, foliage and firewood out of, or within, 6 zones. 5 of these zones were in Devon and 1 in Dorset.

The prohibitions in all 6 zones took effect on Friday 12 May 2017 and were lifted on Tuesday 27 March 2018.

Movement restrictions at affected sites where infected trees were found will continue on a site by site basis taking account of the situation in each area based on the current policy approach.

The requirements of the prohibition were intended to reflect a precautionary approach to protect against the risk of spread of infected material. Since finding the disease in late 2016 intelligence has been gathered and extensive research conducted to improve understanding of the disease risk. In the majority of sites in south-west England there has been no evidence of spread to the wider environment.

See the notice relating to the lifting of the movement prohibition:

The Plant Health (Sweet Chestnut Blight) (England) Order 2017
(PDF, 71.2KB, 1 page)

Local woodland and business owners and managers who need further information about the lifting of the movement prohibition may contact the Forestry Commission’s South-West England Area office by email

southwest.fce@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or by telephone on 0300 067 4960.

The horticulture trade, garden centres and householders should contact the PHSI on 01904 405138 or planthealth.info@apha.gsi.gov.uk.

Potato brown rot: watercourses in the Cambridge Fens

This section was updated on 23 February 2018.

Brown rot is a damaging disease of potatoes spread by infected potatoes and by contaminated water.

APHA carries out the annual surveillance programme in England, including watercourses in areas where potatoes are commonly grown.

When a finding is confirmed in water, the watercourse concerned must be officially designated and irrigation restrictions imposed for potato and tomato crops. Irrigation of other crops is not affected.

As a result of the 2016 surveillance programme, 2 watercourses in the Middle Level of the Cambridgeshire Fens have been confirmed as contaminated.

APHA and Defra have been working with national and stakeholder organisations, as well as with individual growers in the area, to ensure that affected potato growers are informed of the consequences and aware of their options for irrigating in future. This included hosting a stakeholder event held in March, Cambridgeshire, which around 50 growers and industry representatives attended.

Other growers in the Middle Level have also been informed of developments and following surveillance in 2017 a limited number of additional watercourses have been confirmed contaminated requiring an extension to existing statutory notices.

Under the provisions of the Plant Health (England) Order 2015, an APHA Notice will demarcate the areas under which restrictions will apply (20km from contaminated watercourses), while a Ministerial Notice will describe the restrictions themselves. These provisions supplement the general provisions of the Order, which prohibit the movement of harmful organisms, such as the pathogen causing potato brown rot.

The Notices will take effect on 21 February 2018.

Restrictions on the import of curry leaves

Fresh curry leaves can only be imported from countries able to fulfil the requirements of the EU import regulations. This includes the need to originate from countries recognised as free of citrus greening disease. Currently there are no countries that have satisfied this requirement and so fresh curry leaves are not permitted to be imported into the EU. If curry

leaves are imported they must be either frozen or dried at time of import.

Restrictions on trade to the Russian Federation

In August 2014 the Russian Federation introduced a ban on the import of some agricultural commodities from the whole of the EU including the UK. This includes fruit and vegetables.

The Russian Federation had extended the ban to August 2016, but the ban is now on-going.

If you are exporting products to the Russian Federation from the UK, which were originally from outside the EU, you are advised to request a phytosanitary certificate from the original country's plant health authority before exporting the consignment to the EU – even if your product does not need a certificate to enter the EU.

The certificate can then accompany your consignment, with any other documents, to prove the origin of the products.

Statutory guidance: SR2015 No 7: household, commercial and industrial waste transfer station with treatment (no building)

Updated: Added to 'details' section: You can apply online for most standard rules environmental permits.

These standard rules allow you to operate a household, commercial and industrial waste transfer station with waste treatment at a specified location.

The permitted activities must not be carried out within:

- 500 metres of a European Site, Ramsar Site or Site of Special Scientific Interest
- 50 metres of any well, spring or borehole used for the supply of water for human consumption, including private water supplies
- 500 metres of any residential dwelling or workplace
- a specified air quality management area

You can apply online for most standard rules environmental permits.

Apply for a standard rules environmental permit.