



**The Food and Environment  
Research Agency**

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Fera provide a range of services to help you to export plants, plant products (including grain and bulbs), fruit and vegetables, potatoes (including seed potatoes), seeds, soil or agricultural machinery to countries outside the European Community (EC).

This leaflet explains the type of services we provide and the standard of service we aim to deliver. It also explains the charges payable for export certification services.

Under single market arrangements different requirements apply to trade with other EC countries. If you require more information on sending plants, plant products and other material to countries within the EC a separate booklet, 'Plant Health Guide to Plant Passporting and Marketing Requirements', is available (this can be viewed on our website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/plants/publications/plantHealth/documents/pass.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/plants/publications/plantHealth/documents/pass.pdf)). Copies can be obtained by contacting your local Fera PHSI office.

Some plant species are considered to be endangered and imports and exports of such species (including all cacti and orchids) are subject to licences issued under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). For information please contact the Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service, 1/17 Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6EB. Telephone: 0117 372 8691/8168. Website: [www.ukcites.gov.uk](http://www.ukcites.gov.uk).

If you are still unclear about anything after reading this leaflet please do not hesitate to seek advice from your local Fera PHSI. Contact details can be found on the Fera website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPlh.cfm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPlh.cfm)

A different system operates in Scotland. Information about export certification in Scotland may be obtained from:

- Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspectors, Directorate (SGRPID)  
Plant Health and Potatoes Branch  
Pentland House, 47 Robb's Loan  
Edinburgh EH14 1TY  
Tel: 0131 244 6345/6351  
Fax: 0131 244 6509/6539



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

## SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION

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1. In order to prevent the introduction of harmful pests and diseases most countries require that plants, plant products and other plant related material must meet certain plant health standards before they are allowed entry. These standards are laid down by the relevant authorities in each country and vary from country to country.
2. Most countries outside the EC require that consignments must be accompanied by a 'phytosanitary' or plant health certificate issued by the plant health authority in the exporting country. A phytosanitary certificate provides importing countries with an assurance that consignments meet the required plant health standard. Certificates are issued by the local Fera PHSI office for exports from England and Wales. Certificates for exports from Scotland are issued by SGRPID.
3. In most cases, depending on the requirements of the importing country, phytosanitary certificates can only be issued following satisfactory official inspection of the material for export. In some circumstances it may also be necessary for a sample to be examined by an official laboratory. The laboratories to be used are as follows:
  - **Fera Laboratory** for examinations to detect the presence of particular pests and diseases;
  - **Official Seed Testing Station, (OSTS) Cambridge** for examinations to confirm freedom from prohibited weed seeds, parasitic plants and certain plant diseases.
4. If the material you intend to export was imported into Great Britain with a phytosanitary certificate and has simply been stored, repacked or split up before re-export to a country outside the EC, then most countries require that the consignment be accompanied by a 'reforwarding' phytosanitary certificate in addition to the original phytosanitary certificate. In most cases reforwarding certificates can be issued without any inspection or testing.
5. In addition to a phytosanitary certificate some countries also require that consignments be accompanied by an import permit issued by the relevant plant health authority in the importing country. Import permits often specify additional requirements, such as freedom from certain pests and diseases, and so must be obtained before you apply for pre-export inspection or export certification.
6. We can provide information on the plant health import requirements of most countries. However, it is sometimes quicker for your importer to obtain written requirements.

### What services are available?

7. In order to assist you in demonstrating that material meets the relevant plant health standards of the importing country. We provide the following services in connection with the certification of material for export:
  - Soil sampling;
  - Growing season inspections;
  - Pre-export inspection and certification (other than seeds for sowing);
  - Pre-export inspection and certification of seeds for sowing;
  - Certification of consignments of grain for export.

### Soil sampling and soil freedom

8. Before plants can be exported many countries require that the soil or growing medium in which they are growing is sampled and tested to establish freedom from certain pests and diseases. Some countries also require that the roots of all plants are washed free of soil or growing medium to minimise the risk of carrying pests and diseases. Where this is required your local Fera PHSI will need to visit your premises at least two weeks before the export is due to take place in order to carry out soil sampling or to check that plants are free from soil.

### Growing season inspections

9. In some cases a growing season inspection is required to establish freedom from pests and diseases which may not be apparent at the time of export. This often applies to plants being exported in the dormant state and to flower bulbs. In order to carry out a growing season inspection your local Fera PHSI may have to inspect the plants in active growth several months before the export is due to take place.

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### Pre-export inspection and certification (other than seeds for sowing but including seed potatoes)

10. In addition to any soil sampling or growing season inspections which may be required, exports of plants, grain, farm machinery and some plant products, including bulbs, fruit and vegetables (including seed and ware potatoes) require a pre-export inspection by your local Fera PHSI. Samples may also have to be sent to the Fera Laboratory for examination. Your local Fera PHSI can only issue a phytosanitary certificate following a satisfactory pre-export inspection and examination.
11. Pre-export inspection is not normally necessary for exports of other plant products, including peas, beans, tea, tobacco etc. However, samples will have to be sent by the exporter to the Fera Laboratory for examination. In such cases certificates are issued following a satisfactory test result from the Fera Laboratory.

### Pre-export inspection and certification of seed for sowing (other than seed potatoes)

12. In most cases it is necessary for samples of seed for export to be examined by the Fera Laboratory for the presence of seed borne pests and diseases. Samples are normally taken by a Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspector. If the seed meets the required standard, phytosanitary certificates can then be issued over the course of the next 12 months for the full quantity of seed from which the samples were taken. In some circumstances it may also be necessary for a sample to be examined by the OSTs, Cambridge before certificates can be issued. A separate charge will be made by the OSTs for this service. In a few cases the importing country requires the seed consignment and/or surrounding storage area to be free from storage pests. Such inspection can be carried out by the local Fera PHSI.

### Certification of consignments of grain for export

13. The arrangements for the issue of phytosanitary certificates for export of grain are contained in a separate leaflet GSOP 1. Copies can be obtained from your local Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspector office. Contact details can be found on our website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPIh.cfm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPIh.cfm)

### How do I apply for these services?

14. Complete the relevant application form. Copies are available on the Fera website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/plants/forms/plantHealthForms.cfm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/plants/forms/plantHealthForms.cfm) or from your local Fera PHSI office. Return the form to your local Fera PHSI office or the Fera Laboratory as indicated on the application form. We cannot provide any services unless we have received one of the following application forms, properly completed and signed.
  - PH 13 Soil sampling for Potato Cyst Nematode
  - PHE 86 Growing season inspections
  - PHE 36 Pre-export inspection and certification (other than seeds for sowing but including seed potatoes)
  - HH 91 Certification of Plant Products
  - PHE 90 Pre-export inspection and certification of seeds for sowing
  - HH 36A Pre-export inspection and certification of agricultural machinery
  - PHE 60 Pre-export inspection and certification of potatoes
  - HH 93 Certification of grain for export

**IMPORTANT: if you require services on more than one holding and the holdings are not in the same district or adjoining districts you must make separate applications for each holding.**

For these purposes a district is defined as:

in England a civil parish, or where there is no civil parish, a district ward

in Wales a community.

### How much will I have to pay?

15. Details of the fees for export certification services are given in Section D. There is a charge per quarter hour for all work undertaken at your premises by the Fera PHSI in connection with export inspection and certification services. There is a minimum charge for a visit.
16. The actual charge you will have to pay will be based on the time spent by the Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspector on your premises. The charge includes an element for any sampling or scientific analysis which may be necessary to meet the importing country's plant health requirements. A separate charge will be made by the OSTs for any samples they examine. A verbal

## SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION

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estimate of how much you may have to pay will be provided by the Fera PHSI prior to him or her undertaking the work.

17. There is a separate charge for phytosanitary certificates issued (e.g. for tobacco and other plant products) where no Fera PHSI involvement is necessary. See Section D for details.
18. All export inspection and certification charges are exempt from VAT.

### **What will I be charged if a Fera PHSI is already at my premises performing another (non- export) chargeable service?**

19. You will be charged for the actual time the Fera PHSI is on your premises performing export related services. You will be charged separately at the appropriate rate for any non-export related chargeable work.

### **What do I pay if I require export services which do not involve a Fera PHSI's visit?**

20. If you take material to be inspected and certified to the Fera PHSI's office, rather than have the Fera PHSI visit you, you will be charged for the actual time taken to carry out the inspection and certification.
21. If you visit a Fera PHSI in his/her office and require a re-forwarding certificate for material that does not require inspection you will be charged the appropriate fee as set out in Section D.
22. If you require phytosanitary certificates in any other circumstances where a visit from a Fera PHSI is not required (but where other examinations or testing may be necessary) you will be charged the appropriate fee set out in Section D. This includes certificates (and re-forwarding certificates) issued for plant products (e.g. peas, beans, tea, tobacco etc.).

### **Are there concessions for small exporters?**

23. Yes. If you are not registered for VAT or if the value of your certified exports in the last financial year was less than £5,000 you may be eligible for reduced charges. Please see Section B: Concessions for Small Exporters.

### **Can I apply for various export services (e.g. growing season inspection and pre-export inspection) at the same time?**

24. Yes. You may apply for different export certification services at the same time. You will be charged for the total time spent by the Fera PHSI on your premises.

### **What if my consignment fails inspection or testing?**

25. The appropriate fee will be charged even if your consignment fails inspection or testing because we will have undertaken the same amount of work as if the consignment had not failed.

### **What do I pay if I am already paying for soil sampling or growing season inspections under the Plant Health Propagation Scheme (PHPS) or Seed Potato Classification Scheme (SPCS)?**

26. If you have a soil sample taken or growing season inspection carried out under the PHPS or the SPCS and the testing or inspection carried out under those schemes would be adequate to meet the requirements of the country to which the plants etc. are to be exported, further sampling or inspection will not normally be necessary. Please consult your local Fera PHSI.

### **How do I pay?**

27. Within 30 days you will receive an invoice giving details of the export services with which you have been provided (and other chargeable services you may have received in the same period) and the fees payable. Payment will then be due immediately.

<p><b>Failure to make prompt payment could result in the withholding of services in future.</b></p>
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## SECTION B – CONCESSIONS FOR SMALL EXPORTERS

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### Am I eligible for the concession?

1. You may be eligible for the small exporters' concession if you come into either of the following categories:
  - you are not registered for VAT in respect of any trade or business in plants, plant products, seeds, soil or agricultural machinery. (More precisely, you may be eligible if you are not a taxable person for the purposes of the VAT Act 1983 or, if you are a taxable person, you make no taxable supplies of plants, plant products, seeds, soil or agricultural machinery for the purposes of that Act);  
**or**
  - the value of your certified exports or sales for certified export **was less than £5,000** in the previous financial year.
2. You may be eligible for this concession if you run a small business or if you are one of the following:
  - a private individual making a non-commercial export;  
**or**
  - an amateur plant enthusiast;  
**or**
  - a university or other non-commercial scientific establishment.

### How much is the concession?

3. If you qualify for the concession you will be charged for export certification services at half-price. **You cannot, however, obtain services at half-price beyond a maximum total of £250 at half-price (£500 full-price value) in any one financial year.** The first service you obtain which takes you over the £250 limit will be charged at full-rate.

### How do I apply for the concession?

4. This concession is not granted automatically. If you wish to apply for services at half-price you must complete the form "Application for Export Services at Concessionary Rates" (PHE 3). Copies of PHE 3 are available from your local Plant Health and Seeds Inspector.
5. You must complete the form and sign it, declaring that you are eligible for the concession and send (or give) it to your local Fera PHSI. This applies even if you are intending to apply for services where no PHSI involvement is necessary.

### When do I apply?

6. You only need to apply once during any financial year.
7. If you are an occasional exporter and you think you may be eligible you should complete form PHE 3 as soon as you can, preferably at least 4 weeks before you are likely to require your first export service of the financial year.
8. If you are a regular exporter you should complete form PHE 3 each year at the beginning of April.

### Do I have to prove my eligibility?

9. You may be asked to do so. You can only qualify for services at the reduced rate if we are satisfied that you are eligible. This means that you may be asked to provide evidence. This might be, for example:
  - a copy of your usual trade receipt to demonstrate that you are not registered for VAT;  
**or**
  - a letter from Customs and Excise attesting that your business is not registered for VAT;  
**or**
  - copies of your business records or accounts to demonstrate that you exported less than £5,000 worth of plants etc. in the financial year. (These would be treated confidentially).

### What happens if I cease to be eligible in the course of a financial year?

10. If you are receiving services at half-price because you have not been registered for VAT and you become registered for VAT during any financial year, you must inform your local Fera PHSI immediately in writing. From the time you become liable to be registered for VAT you are no longer eligible for the concession.
11. If you are receiving services at half-price because the value of your exports was less than £5,000 in the previous financial year and your exports exceed this limit in the current year you should also inform your local Fera PHSI in writing. You will continue to be eligible for the concession until the end of the current financial year but you will cease to be eligible from 1 April of the following year.

## SECTION C – WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US

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### Response

1. We aim to deliver phytosanitary certificates by the date requested, providing we receive a properly completed application form 7 days in advance.
2. We will always try to answer telephone calls promptly. If the first person you speak to other than the operator, cannot deal with your enquiry in full, you will be passed to someone who can. If necessary we will call you back.
3. We aim to answer all correspondence from you within 15 working days of receipt. If this is not possible, for example, where there is a need to carry out further investigations or to consult more widely, we will let you know why.

### Information

4. Our objective and commitment is to work with you in a manner which is:
  - helpful
  - efficient
  - fair and courteous
5. We will identify ourselves by name in all correspondence, on the telephone and in face to face contact. All Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspectors carry identification and business cards and wherever appropriate will also wear name badges.

### Consultation

6. If you have any views on the service we provide we would like to hear from you. If you think our service could be better it is important that you tell us as this will help us to get it right in the future. You can do this either over the telephone, by fax or in writing. Fera PHSIs, in their contact with you, may ask what you think of the service and how we might improve it.

### Value for money

7. We are committed to providing export certification services in an efficient manner so that the cost of those services is kept to a minimum. You will be advised of the likely cost to your business before the work is carried out.

### What we ask of you

8. Please read this leaflet and the relevant application forms and ask us for guidance if you are not clear what you have to do.
9. Please complete application forms fully, accurately and legibly. We do our best to keep application forms as simple as possible but if you have any problems, we will do our best to help you to sort them out. We suggest you keep a copy of your application form.

10. Apply in good time. The sooner the application form is with us, the sooner we can deal with it. We will do our best to deal with your application as quickly as possible. Please allow sufficient time before export for soil sampling and growing season inspections to be carried out if these services are required.
11. When you receive a request for payment, please make payment as quickly as possible. Failure to pay for services provided may mean that we are unable to provide services in future.

### What if you are dissatisfied with our service?

12. If you have any concerns or specific complaints about the way Fera operates or the services we provide, please refer to Fera's Customer Charter for details of our complaints procedure. The Customer Charter is available on the Fera website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/news](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/news).

### 13. Data Protection

Information provided will be used for the processing of your application. Details will be held in our computer system and will be used to compile statistics on activity in your sector for submission to the EC Commission and for administrative purposes. In emergency situations, such as a pest outbreak, information (including the location of licenced material) may be used by Fera, Defra and other Government Departments or their appointed agents.

Fera may be required to release information, including personal data and commercial information, on request under the Environmental Information Regulations, the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information or the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Fera will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Fera or its appointed agents may use the name, address and other details on your application form to contact you in connection with occasional customer research aimed at improving the services that Fera provides to you.

## SECTION D – SCHEDULE OF FEES

Please refer to sections A or B for information on how and when these fees are payable.

	<b>Basic Fee £</b>
<b>Services provided by the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate</b>	
Minimum charge (half hour) for all export services involving a visit or inspection including the issue of a phytosanitary certificate (other than grain exports)	40.50
Charge for each additional quarter hour unit	20.25
Issue of a phytosanitary certificate for consignments of grain	45.00
Issue of a phytosanitary or re-forwarding certificate where no visit, inspection or laboratory test required	5.00
<b>Services provided where no PHSI involvement is necessary</b>	
Issue of phytosanitary certificates (includes an element for laboratory examination)	20.00
Issue of a phytosanitary or a re-forwarding certificate where no laboratory examination required (includes small samples of grain)	5.00