



The Food and Environment  
Research Agency

## PLANT HEALTH

The Plant Health (England) Order 2005 (as amended)

The Plant Health (Wales) Order 2006 (as amended)

# Explanatory Leaflet on Importing Naturally or Artificially Dwarfed ('Bonsai') Plants into Great Britain

---

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 certain plants (including naturally or artificially dwarfed plants of the bonsai type), plant pests and other material. These controls, the purpose of which is to protect plant health (other than in relation to forest trees), are laid down in respect of England in the Plant Health (England) Order 2005 (as amended), and in respect of Wales and Scotland in the Plant Health (Wales) Order 2006 (as amended) and the Plant Health (Scotland) Order 2005 (as amended). The controls in relation to forest trees are laid down in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 (as amended).

2. This leaflet provides guidance on the requirements and restrictions which apply to the import into Great Britain of plants of the bonsai-type planted or intended for planting. If you are not clear on any points or require more information please contact your local Fera Plant Health and Seeds Inspectors Office. Contact details for all our officers are available on the Fera website at: [www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPIh.cfm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/fera/contactUs/contactPIh.cfm)

For enquiries in Scotland please contact:  
Scottish Government Rural Payments and  
Inspections Directorate (SGRPID)  
Plant, Horticulture and Potatoes Branch  
Horticulture Unit, Room 324B,  
Pentland House, 47 Robb's Loan,  
Edinburgh EH14 1TY  
Tel: 0131 244 6345  
Fax: 0131 244 6449  
e-Mail: [php@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:php@scotland.gsi.gov.uk)

3. The requirements and restrictions applying to forest trees are prescribed in the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 (as amended). If you require more information 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  
e-Mail: [plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:plant.health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

4. **Compliance with plant health legislation does not relieve you of obligations imposed by other regulations and requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with any other relevant restrictions and requirements.**

For example, there are restrictions and prohibitions on the import of some species of plant which are considered endangered. Details of plants protected by endangered species legislation (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES)) can be obtained from the following address:

Defra,  
Wildlife Licensing and Registration  
Service,  
1/17 Temple Quay House,  
2 The Square,  
Temple Quay,  
Bristol, BS1 6EB  
Tel: 0117 372 8691/8168  
Fax: 0117 372 8206  
e-Mail: [wildlife.licensing@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:wildlife.licensing@defra.gsi.gov.uk)  
Website:  
[www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/  
index.htm](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/index.htm)  
or  
[www.ukcites.gov.uk](http://www.ukcites.gov.uk)

5. **This leaflet is intended as a general guide only. If you are in doubt or require more information about importing plants of the bonsai-type please contact Fera, The Scottish Government or FC, as appropriate.**

---

6. **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 with information and advice relevant to the importation of plant health controlled material, or wider plant health issues which may be of interest or importance to you. They may also be used in connection with occasional customer research aimed at improving the services that Fera provides to you.

## Importing bonsai-type plants from outside the EC

---

### ■ Which plants can be imported from outside the EC?

1. You may import bonsai-type plants, **other than those referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 below**, from outside the EC with a **phytosanitary certificate** issued by the plant health authority in the country of export. A phytosanitary certificate is essentially an official statement that the plants meet certain requirements, have been inspected and found to be free from harmful organisms.
2. The requirements that bonsai-type plants have to meet before they can enter England are set out in the Plant Health (England) Order 2005, Schedule 4A (64), which is reproduced below. In respect of Wales and Scotland the requirements are set out in the Plant Health (Wales) Order 2006 (as amended) and the Plant Health (Scotland) Order 2005 (as amended).

#### **Schedule 4A (64) of the Plant Health (England) Order 2005**

Without prejudice to the requirements in items 60 and 61, the plants shall be accompanied by an official statement that:

- (a) the plants, including those collected directly from natural habitats, shall have been grown, held and trained for at least two consecutive years prior to dispatch in officially registered nurseries, which are subject to an officially supervised control regime; and
- (b) the plants in the nurseries referred to in paragraph (a) shall at least during the period referred to in (a):
  - (i) be potted, in pots which are placed on shelves at least 50 cm above ground;
  - (ii) have been subjected to appropriate treatments to ensure freedom from non-European rusts (the active ingredient, concentration and date of application of these treatments shall be mentioned on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export under the rubric

“disinfestation and/or disinfection treatment”);

- (iii) have been officially inspected at least six times a year at appropriate intervals for the presence of plant pests mentioned in the Schedules to this Order. These inspections, which shall also be carried out on plants in the immediate vicinity of the nurseries referred to in paragraph (a), shall be carried out at least by visual examination of each row in the field or nursery and by visual examination of all parts of the plant above the growing medium, using a random sample of at least 300 plants from a given genus where the number of plants of that genus is not more than 3,000 plants, or 10% of the plants if there are more than 3,000 plants from that genus;
- (iv) have been found free, in the inspections in paragraph (iii), from the relevant plant pests. Infested plants shall be removed. The remaining plants, where appropriate, shall be effectively treated, and in addition shall be held for an appropriate period and inspected to ensure freedom from such plant pests;
- (v) have been planted in either an unused artificial growing medium or in a natural growing medium which has been treated by fumigation or by appropriate heat treatment and examined afterwards and found free of any plant pests; and
- (vi) have been kept under conditions which ensure that the growing medium has been maintained free from plant pests and within two weeks prior to dispatch, have been:
  - (aa) shaken and washed with clean water to remove the original growing medium and kept bare rooted; or

- (bb) shaken and washed with clean water to remove the original growing medium and replanted in growing medium which meets the conditions laid down in paragraph (v); or
  - (cc) subjected to appropriate treatments to ensure that the growing medium is free from plant pests (the active ingredient, concentration and date of application of these treatments shall be mentioned on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export under the rubric “disinfestation and/or disinfection treatment”); and
- (c) the plants on the nurseries referred to in paragraph (a) shall be packed in closed containers which have been officially sealed and bear the registration number of the registered nursery, which number shall also be indicated under the rubric “additional declaration” on the phytosanitary certificate or phytosanitary certificate for re-export enabling the consignments to be identified.

Other requirements specified in Schedules 4A (20) (21) (24) (25) (26) (28) (29) (31) and (32) of the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 also apply. Because of the wide range of plants which may be used for bonsai it is not possible to include all the various requirements in this leaflet. If you are considering importing plants from outside the EC please contact Fera, SGRPID or FC as appropriate, before import.

■ **Which plants cannot be imported from outside the EC?**

3. You **may not import** the following plants (including plants of the bonsai-type) from the countries shown:

- \* These plants may be imported with a phytosanitary certificate if they are dormant and free from leaves, flowers and fruit.
- + If they are dormant and free from leaves, flowers and fruit these plants may be imported with a phytosanitary certificate from Mediterranean countries, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the continental states of the USA.
- # These plants may be imported with a phytosanitary certificate if they are free from leaves.

**All third countries**

- Citrus* L. (Orange, Lemon, etc.)
- Fortunella* Swingle (Kumquat)
- Poncirus* Raf. (Japanese Bitter Orange)

**All non-European countries**

- Abies* Mill. (Fir)
- Castanea* Mill. (Chestnut)#
- Cedrus* Trew (Cedar)
- Chaenomeles* Lindl. (Flowering Quince)\*
- Chamaecyparis* Spach (False Cypress)
- Crataegus* L. (Hawthorn)\*
- Cydonia* Mill. (Quince)+
- Juniperus* L. (Juniper)
- Larix* Mill. (Larch)
- Malus* Mill. (Apple)+
- Picea* A. Dietr. (Spruce)
- Pinus* L. (Pine)
- Prunus* L. (Cherry, Peach, Almond, etc.)+
- Pseudotsuga* Carr. (Douglas Fir, etc.)
- Pyrus* L. (Pear)+
- Quercus* L. (Oak)#
- Rosa* L. (Rose)\*
- Tsuga* Carr. (Hemlock)

**North American countries**

- Populus* L. (Poplar)#

**Algeria and Morocco**

- Phoenix* spp. (Date Palm)

**USA, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Korea Democratic People’s Republic**

- Photinia* Ldl. (Chinese Hawthorn)\*

4. Although they are not normally used for bonsai, the import of plants of the family *Gramineae*, other than plants of ornamental perennial grasses of the subfamilies *Bambusoideae*, *Panicoideae*, and of the genera *Buchloe*, *Bouteloua* Lag., *Calamagrostis*, *Cortaderia* Stapf., *Glyceria* R. Br., *Hakonechloa* Mak.ex Honda, *Hystrix*, *Molinia*, *Phalaris* L., *Shibataea*, *Spartina* Schreb., *Stipa* L. and *Uniola* L., intended for planting, other than seeds is also prohibited.

# Importing bonsai-type plants from EC countries

---

1. Phytosanitary certificates are not required for plants (including bonsai-type plants) moved within the EC. Instead a limited range of plants which may host quarantine pests and diseases require a **plant passport** when traded commercially. Plant passports are issued in the country of export and are essentially a statement that the plants are free from harmful organisms.
2. The plant health requirements (other than in relation to forest trees) that bonsai-type plants have to meet before they can enter:
  - (a) England from other EC countries are set out in Schedule 6A and 6B of the Plant Health (England) Order 2005.
  - (b) Wales and Scotland are set out in Schedules 6A and 6B of the Plant Health (Wales) Order 2006 and the Plant Health (Scotland) Order 2005.

The plant health requirements in relation to forest trees that bonsai-type plants have to meet before they can enter Great Britain are set out in Schedule 4B (2) to (7) of the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005. Because of the wide range of plants which may be used for bonsai it is not possible to include all the various requirements in this leaflet. If you are considering importing bonsai-type plants from EC countries please contact Fera, SGRPID or FC as appropriate, before import.

3. To move certain plants within the UK or to send them elsewhere within the EC, businesses must be registered with Fera, The SGRPID or FC, as appropriate, and authorised to issue plant passports. If you intend to grow or, in some cases, sell or move bonsai-type plants which require plant passports please contact Fera, SGRPID or FC as appropriate for advice.

## Section C

### Travellers' concessions

---

1. There are concessions for travellers from the phytosanitary certificate and plant passport requirements applying to bonsai-type plants as long as the plants are:

- in your personal baggage;
- for your own household use and not intended for use in the course of business; and
- free from signs of pests and diseases.

2. The following concessions apply:

(a) **Travellers returning from countries within the EC**

- i) In England, you may bring back any plants from EC countries.
- ii) In Wales and Scotland, you may bring back any plants from EC countries as long as they were grown in the EC.

(b) **Travellers returning from non-EC countries within the Euro-Mediterranean area.** This includes

European countries which are not EC member states such as Switzerland and Norway and also the following countries: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

You may bring back a maximum of 5 plants.

(c) **Travellers returning from all other non-EC countries**

No concession – normal phytosanitary certificate requirements apply.

3. If you require more information on the concessions applying to travellers please contact Fera, SGRPID or FC as appropriate for advice.

The above concessions do not apply to the prohibited plants listed in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Section A.

## Section D

# Importing bonsai-type plants from Japan

---

1. The import of many bonsai-type plants from Japan is prohibited. However, the import of plants of *Chamaecyparis* Spach (False Cypress), *Juniperus* L. (Juniper) and *Pinus* L. (Pine) may be permitted under the terms of a licence granted in accordance with Commission Decision 93/452/EEC and subsequent amendments.
2. Under the terms of the licence the plants must be of the bonsai-type of the genus *Chamaecyparis* Spach, genus *Juniperus* L. or in the case of the genus *Pinus* L. either entirely of the species *Pinus parviflora* Sieb & Zucc. (*Pinus pentaphylla* Mayr.), or grafted on a rootstock of a *Pinus* species other than *Pinus parviflora* Sieb & Zucc. In the latter case, the rootstock must not bear any shoots.
3. The licence will prescribe conditions which are designed to ensure that the material imported does not pose a risk to plant health. These will include a requirement that the plants to be imported shall have been grown for at least two years in officially registered bonsai nurseries. The licence will also contain requirements for pre-export inspection and certification and post-entry quarantine and inspection.
4. A fee will be charged for the issue of a licence and for post-entry inspections.
5. If you require more information on importing bonsai-type plants from Japan or a licence application form please contact Fera or SGRPID as appropriate.