

## Plant health control

If you want to export plants, plant products and any other material capable of harbouring plant pests (e.g. wooden products and containers, soil, etc) to the EU, you must comply with the protective measures ([CELEX 32000L0029](#)) such as:

1. Import Bans;
2. Phytosanitary certificate and/or phytosanitary certificate for re-export;
3. Customs Inspection and plant health checks;
4. Importers Register;
5. Advance notice on imports.

These phytosanitary measures aim to prevent the introduction and/or spread of pests and organisms harmful to plants or plant products across the EU boundaries. Those measures enforce the [International Plant Protection Convention](#) (IPPC), signed by the EU countries and which sets out the basic rules and control procedures to secure a common and effective action to protect the countries' agricultural and forestry resources.

The IPPC requires every contracting country to establish a national plant protection organization to inspect growing crops and to report on pests and control them. A complete listing of the national plant protection organizations (NPPOS) can be found at the website for the IPPC.

There are some exemptions for each phytosanitary measure (e.g. plants and plant products for trial, scientific purposes, work on varieties selection; internal transit; small quantities that do not pose a risk of spreading harmful organisms etc.) (Council Directive 2000/29/EC). They are usually granted for a limited period, subject to special import conditions and to a specific licence.

French Overseas Departments and Spanish Canary Islands, in view of their agricultural and ecological characteristics, may request additional conditions to those laid down in the Directive assuming they are justified on grounds of the protection of health and life of plants in their territories.

### Import bans

EU countries shall ban the introduction into their territory of:

- A. Certain particularly dangerous harmful organisms, which are listed in [Annex I, Part A](#) to Council Directive 2000/29/EC.
- B. Plants and plant products listed in [Annex II, Part A](#), where they are contaminated by the relevant harmful organisms listed in that part of the Annex to the Directive.
- C. Plants or plant products listed in [Annex III, Part A](#), where they originate in the relevant countries referred to in that part of the Annex to the Directive.
- D. Plants, plant products and other objects listed in [Annex IV, Part A](#), except for those meeting the special requirements indicated in that part of the Annex to the Directive.

Regarding wood packaging, the provisions introduced by EU legislation ([CELEX 32004L0102](#)) establish that wood packages of any type (cases, boxes, crates, drums, pallets, box pallets and other load boards, pallet collars, etc) shall go through one of the approved treatments specified in [Annex I](#) to FAO International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15, bear the corresponding mark as specified in [Annex II](#) and be made from debarked wood

EU legislation ([CELEX 32005D0051](#)) authorises EU countries to provide derogations regarding the prohibitions above mentioned for soil originating in certain third countries under specific conditions provided for in the Annex of the same Decision and destined for treatment in dedicated hazardous-waste incinerators. Certain EU areas, which are free from plant pests established elsewhere in the EU, have been designated as "protected zones" and may be affected by special bans and requirements to prevent spreading of harmful organisms to particular crops ([Annex I Part B](#); [Annex II Part B](#); [Annex III Part B](#) and [Annex IV Part B](#) to Council Directive 2000/29/EC).

### Phytosanitary certificate and/or phytosanitary certificate for re-export.

If you export plants and plant products listed in [Annex V, Part B](#) to Council Directive 2000/29/EC they must be accompanied either by an official "phytosanitary certificate" or a "phytosanitary certificate for re-export" (in case the consignment after being dispatched from a non-EU country, has been stored, repacked or split up in another non-EU country).

Those documents certify the phytosanitary conditions of plants and plants products, and also that the shipment has been officially inspected, complies with statutory requirements for entry into the EU and is free of quarantine pests and other harmful pathogens.

They shall be at least in one of the official languages of the EU and shall be issued by the designated authorities of the country of export or re-export and made out not more than 14 days before the date on which the plants, plant products or other objects covered by it have left the country of issuance.

Phytosanitary certificates shall be issued in compliance with the provisions of the IPPC and taking into account the [FAO International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures No 12](#) on Guidelines for phytosanitary certificates.

## Customs inspection and plant health checks.

You can only export plant and plant products through an authorised EU point of entry. There, they will be supervised by EU national officials at arrival.

Besides, the importer or its representative must give advance notice of the arrival and submit a [request for inspection](#). The inspections will consist in documentary checks, identity checks and, when judged necessary by the competent officials, also plant health checks. Release from customs can only be done after a favorable result.

EU countries may require airport authorities, harbour authorities, importers or operators to give, as soon as they are aware of the imminent arrival of a consignment of plants, plant products and other objects advance notice to the customs office of point of entry and to the official body of point of entry.

Besides, the plants and plant products listed in [Annex V, Part B](#) to Council Directive 2000/29/EC shall, from the time of their entry in the EU, be subject to customs inspections and supervision by the responsible official bodies.

The inspections shall consist in:

- Documentary checks establishing that the required certificates, alternative documents or marks have been issued or satisfied
- Identity checks establishing that the plants, plant products or other objects conform to the ones declared on the required documents and
- Plant health checks establishing that the plants, plant products or other objects, including their wood packing material if any, comply with the specific requirements and phytosanitary measures specified in Council Directive 2000/29/EC and can be imported into the EU.

The inspections will take place at the EU's border inspection post (BIP). However, identity checks and plant health checks may be carried out at the place of destination provided that there is satisfaction of specific guarantees and documents regarding transport of plants and plant products determined for each particular case

In addition and without prejudice to provisions of Council Directive 2000/29/EC, plants, plant products and any other material capable of harbouring plant pests may be subject to [emergency measures](#).

## Importers register

Importers, whether or not producers, of plants, plant products or other objects, listed in [Annex V, Part B](#) to Council Directive 2000/29/EC must be included in an official register of an EU country under an official registration number.

## Advance notice on imports & inspection

### Further information

European Commission, DG Health and Consumer Protection, [Food Plant EUROPHYT](#) - EU Notification System for Plant Health Interceptions

Last update on: January 2013. Please check the [Export Helpdesk](#) for updated information

**How to export to the EU?**

**Check it at [www.exporthelp.europa.eu](http://www.exporthelp.europa.eu)**

