



RHS Venues Biosecurity Policy & Regulations 2025

Applies to all RHS shows and events which take place at RHS Venues (Wisley, Hyde Hall, Rosemoor, Bridgewater, Harlow Carr, Royal Horticultural Halls). The regulations must be followed by all associated staff, exhibitors and contractors.

All plants and cut flowers intended for use or sale at RHS shows and events should be visibly free from pests and diseases.

Biosecurity and plant health inspections take place at all RHS shows and events. Plants (i.e. living plants and parts thereof) and cut flowers which do not meet regulations or are found to be unhealthy may be removed at the discretion of the RHS.

For any Biosecurity and Plant Health enquiries please contact showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk

Biosecurity Policy *Abridged version, full version available on request

At RHS shows and events, plants (i.e. living plants and parts thereof) and cut flowers, originating from the UK, Europe and other continents are brought together, posing a unique biosecurity risk. To mitigate this risk and protect UK gardens, biodiversity and horticultural trades the RHS has developed Biosecurity Regulations specific to RHS shows and events. These are designed to minimise the risk of introducing harmful and invasive organisms to RHS shows, events and garden sites, and the threat of them spreading within and beyond a show, event or garden site.

Biosecurity Guidance for Sourcing Plants & Cut Flowers

When selecting a plant or cut flower supplier it is important to consider:

- Reputation for quality and plant health, e.g. is the supplier Plant Healthy certified?
- Previous history supplying RHS shows and events
- Where the majority of plants or cut flowers will originate from, e.g. imported or UK grown?

Exhibitors and contractors should work with suppliers to ensure that all plants have been monitored on a UK nursery for a minimum of 3 months during a growing season, in particular imported woody plants (trees, shrubs, hedging, palms, tree ferns).

Please ensure that suppliers do not deliver poor quality or visibly unhealthy plants or cut flowers to an RHS show or event.

If directly importing plants or cut flowers please use the following link for information on the relevant import rules and pest and disease risks: gov.uk/guidance/check-plant-health-information-and-import-rules

Biosecurity Regulations

Movement of Plants & Cut Flowers Into and Out of RHS Garden Sites

Plants and cut flowers should be contained or covered as much as is physically possible when being moved into, out of, or around an RHS garden site, e.g. in an enclosed vehicle, in boxes, in bags. To organise vehicle access to site please contact the show or event manager.

Plants can be uncovered once arrived at the garden destination, e.g. designated event space, exhibitor pitch, workshop space.

PLEASE DO NOT plant or place plants into garden borders, containers, lawns or glass house areas without prior permission from the show or event manager.

Unused or waste plant material should be removed from site or disposed of in general waste. **PLEASE DO NOT** add it to green waste recycling on a garden site.

UK Plant Passports *Does not apply to cut flowers

The UK plant passport scheme applies to professional operators selling plants to other professional operators, or distance selling plants. Only registered professional operators can issue UK plant passports, e.g. nurseries, design, landscaping and gardening businesses, horticultural societies and charities. The RHS is a registered professional operator.

To register visit: gov.uk/government/publications/register-to-become-a-plant-health-professional-operator

Plants sold on a show or event site must meet UK plant passport requirements:

- Plants sold to a non-professional operator (e.g. show visitor) do not require a plant passport.
- Plants sold to another professional operator (e.g. horticultural business) require a plant passport.
- Plants sold for delivery (e.g. mail order) require a plant passport.

All professional operators should keep UK plant passport records for 3 years.

Specimen Plants 3m high & above (Trees, shrubs, hedging, palms, tree ferns)

Imported specimen plants 3m high & above pose an increased risk of introducing new pests and diseases into the UK, in comparison to smaller plants. Large canopies, trunks and root balls make thorough plant health inspections difficult. Please adhere to the following:

- **Plant list submission:** Please include size, country of origin and supplier name for all specimen plants 3m high & above.
- **Supplier plant health checks:** Please ensure that suppliers check the health of specimen plants 3m high & above in advance of plants arriving on a show site. See 'Biosecurity Guidance for Sourcing Plants & Cut Flowers'.
- **Reject woody plants with bore holes (entry & exit), 2-3mm and larger.**
- **Reject woody plants with bleeds and/ or discoloured bark.**
- Fully UK grown specimen plants are preferred, e.g. grown in the UK from UK origin seed or cuttings.

Xylella fastidiosa *Does not apply to cut flowers

Xylella fastidiosa (Xf) is a bacterial disease of global concern, it is known to infect over 600 plant species, causing decline in health and death, there is no cure.

Xylella is not yet in the UK but imported high-risk host plants pose the greatest risk of introducing it.

*Cut flowers of high-risk host plants do not pose a risk and can be used at shows and events.

The following Xf high-risk hosts must not be used or sold at RHS shows and events:

Olea europaea (olive), *Nerium oleander* (oleander), *Polygala myrtifolia* (myrtle-leaf milkwort), *Coffea* spp. (coffee), *Spartium junceum* (Spanish broom)

The following Xf high-risk hosts can be used or sold at RHS shows and events if grown from UK origin cuttings or, if imported, have a UK plant passport showing origin as GB:

Lavandula spp. (lavender), *Salvia rosmarinus* (rosemary), *Prunus dulcis* (almond), shrubby *Veronica* spp. (formerly *Hebe*)

UK plant passports can be found on pots, labels and invoices, section D shows the country of origin.

**Tobacco whitefly**

Tobacco whitefly (*Bemisia tabacci*) can cause severe feeding damage and transmit over 110 different viruses. Symptoms include chlorotic spotting, growth distortion, and premature leaf drop.

Imported tender, tropical, sub-tropical plants and cut flowers should be checked thoroughly for signs of Tobacco whitefly when sourcing. This pest is notifiable, infested plants are subject to immediate destruction.

For images and details: planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/factsheets/Bemisia-tabaci-Defra-Plant-Pest-Factsheet-Feb-2017-2.pdf

Spruce (Picea) & Ips typographus

Ips typographus (eight-toothed spruce bark beetle) feeds on live but significantly weakened spruce trees and will infest healthy trees if the population is high. Outbreaks in Kent, Sussex and Surrey have been caused by beetles blown in from the continent.

In June 2024 the demarcated area (DMA) expanded to cover East Anglia as well as the south-east of England, the rest of the UK is a Pest Free Area (PFA).

RHS gardens Wisley & Hyde Hall and the Royal Horticultural Halls sit within the DMA.

- Allowed: *Picea* spp. under 3m but only with permission from the Forestry Commission to move to and from a show or event site.
- Prohibited: *Picea* spp. dead/ felled trees, logs and other material where bark remains.

RHS gardens Rosemoor, Bridgewater & Harlow Carr sit within the PFA.

- Allowed: *Picea* spp. of any size allowed but must not originate from the DMA.

- Avoid: *Picea* spp. dead/ felled trees, logs and other material where bark remains. If essential to the exhibit this material must not originate from the DMA.

For further information visit: gov.uk/government/news/new-restrictions-to-limit-impact-of-ips-typographus-tree-pest

Oak (*Quercus*) & Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

OPM (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) arrived in the UK on imported trees in 2005. The caterpillars feed on oak species causing severe defoliation, impacting tree health. They are a hazard to human and animal health as the hairs on the caterpillar cause eye, skin and respiratory irritation.

OPM is established in Greater London and the home counties, known as the Established Area. A Buffer Zone with a 10km Exclusion Zone surround this area to control further spread.

RHS gardens Wisley & Hyde Hall and the Royal Horticultural Halls sit within the OPM Established Area. All Oak (*Quercus*) species of any size are prohibited to comply with UK legislation which prevents spread into the UK Pest Free Area.

RHS gardens Rosemoor, Bridgewater & Harlow Carr sit within the Pest Free Area, therefore all oak (*Quercus*) species of any size can be used or sold at these gardens. Please be vigilant for this pest when sourcing oak trees.

For further information visit: forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/pest-and-disease-resources/oak-processionary-moth-thaumetopoea-processionea/

Fuchsia spp. & Fuchsia gall mite

Fuchsia gall mite is present at all RHS garden sites.

Plants and cut flowers of *Fuchsia* spp. can be used or sold as long as free from symptoms of Fuchsia gall mite. Plants of *Fuchsia* spp. brought onto a garden site are at risk of infestation, the owner of the plants is wholly responsible for this risk.

Agapanthus spp. & Agapanthus gall midge (*Enigmadiplosis agapanthi*)

Agapanthus gall midge is present at all RHS garden sites.

Plants and cut flowers of *Agapanthus* spp. can be used or sold as long as free from symptoms of Agapanthus gall midge. Plants of *Agapanthus* spp. brought onto a garden site are at risk of infestation, the owner of the plants is wholly responsible for this risk.

Buxus spp. (box) & Box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*)

Plants and cut flowers of *Buxus* spp. **can be used or sold** at RHS gardens Hyde Hall & Wisley, where the moth is present.

Plants and cut flowers of *Buxus* spp. are **prohibited from use or sale** at RHS gardens Bridgewater, Harlow Carr and Rosemoor, where the moth is not present.

Rosa spp. (roses) & Rose rosette virus (*Emaravirus rosae*)

Rose rosette virus is spread by the eriophyoid mite (*Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*) which is present in USA, Canada, Mexico & India. The virus causes deformed flowers and buds and can lead to plant death.

Plants and cut flowers of *Rosa* spp. originating from **UK or EU can be used or sold** at shows and events.

Plants and cut flowers of *Rosa* spp. originating from **USA, Canada, Mexico & India are prohibited** from use or sale at shows and events.