

UK getting ready for horticultural trade after no-deal Brexit

Last Wednesday, the British Government updated the information on "How to import and export plants and plant products if the United Kingdom leaves the European Union (EU) in March 2019 without any agreement."

The guide has been prepared by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the British Agency for Animal and Plant Health.

The document warns that, after the UK leaves the EU, any plant and plant product currently managed under the plant passport scheme will be subject to British import controls, which will maintain biosecurity and replace the current system's guarantees and traceability.

If there's a no-deal Brexit, British importers of EU plants or plant products will have to register on the Horticultural Marketing Inspectorate's website. This will give access to the Procedure for the Electronic Application for Certificates (PEACH) and ensure that the shipment has a phytosanitary certificate issued in the country of origin.

Remote control of shipment documentation

Plants and plant products from the EU will not stop at the border, and the plant health authority of the UK will remotely carry out the controls and documentation handling for incoming shipments.

The text explains that the country's phytosanitary authority will be in charge of the controls and the plant health inspectors will continue to carry out monitoring and inspection controls in national territory, in accordance with current policies.

British horticultural importers have been advised to inform their suppliers of all changes.

At the same time, the Government urges them to find out how to import plants, fruits, vegetables and plant materials from third countries, since in a no-deal scenario, the EU would no longer be obliged to carry out phytosanitary controls on regulated products from non-EU countries bound for the British market.