

Plant Health Policy

Commitment

English Woodlands is a business that has been supplying high quality, healthy plants to our many and varied customers for well over 50 years. Our aim is to be seen by our customers as experts in our field with a reputation for excellence in both the plants we supply and the service and advice we provide.

The spread of plant pests and diseases, and the threats this presents, is therefore something we take very seriously. This policy sets out our commitment and approach to an effective system of management of plant health within our business.

Objective

Our key plant health objective is to prevent the introduction of pests to our nursery and the spread of pests to our plants.

The means of achieving this are based on:

1. the recognition, identification, analysis and evaluation of pest risks, including quarantine and regulated pests, and then
2. adopting a range of controls to either eliminate, or to provide an acceptable level of protection from those risks.

Our Plant Health Management System (PHMS) sets out the details of how we implement our pest risk analysis and the controls we use to manage the risks.

Pest Risk Analysis

The pest risk analysis is a tool that we use to quantify the level of risk and to inform our decisions on which genus and species of plants we will hold on the site and offer to our customers. The analysis takes the UK Plant Health Risk Register risk assessment as its starting point and then factors in any additional risks associated with our site, its location and our activities, to arrive at an assessment of the level of risk before we apply appropriate controls to mitigate these risks. The analysis is available to all relevant staff within the business and is updated when necessary, and at least annually.

Controls - We use a range of controls to manage the risks to our plants to an acceptable level. If the risks cannot be managed to an acceptable level then we will not bring those plants onto the nursery.

Our working procedures, detailed within the PHMS, include specific plant health controls to ensure that plants are checked on arrival at our site, regularly monitored while they remain on the nursery and further checked before despatch to customers.

All plants that enter our site, either from our approved suppliers or from returns from customers, are held away from other stock until they have been checked for pests. Only then may they be moved to other parts of the nursery or be safely disposed of if they are found to present a risk to other plants.

Site housekeeping and hygiene rules

All staff have a responsibility to be vigilant and on the lookout for plant health issues at all times. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the Plant Health Manager or Nursery Manager, who will then investigate and manage the issue appropriately.

Staff must follow the site housekeeping rules and procedures set out within the PHMS, including requirements for cleaning of tools etc., disposal of waste plant material and visitor and contractor arrangements.

Any plant health concerns notified by customers must be reported in the same way and will be managed according to our Complaints Procedure.

Any suspect plant material returned by a customer must be isolated and placed in the quarantine area until a decision is made as to its treatment or disposal in accordance with our returns procedure

The nursery should be kept in a clean, tidy and weed-free condition. Tools, vehicles and forklifts should be regularly cleaned.

Legal Requirements and keeping up to date

We understand and comply with the legal requirements around plant health, including quarantine pests, Plant Passports and Forest Reproductive Material (FRM) regulations. We build effective working relationships with APHA, the Forestry Commission and other agencies.

We ensure that we keep up to date with plant health legislation and requirements, as well as the changing threats posed by pests, through our relationships with APHA and other agencies, the HTA, the trade press, engaging in various trade events, and by reference to the UK Plant Health Risk Register, the Plant Health Portal, email updates and various internet resources.

Training and resources

We ensure that all Plant Health staff have the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively. Training is provided to all relevant staff in plant health procedures. We will provide all necessary resources to enable the PHMS to operate effectively and safely.

Continual Improvement

We look to continually get better at what we do – both as a company and as individuals. As part of this we will carry out a full management review, at least annually, of the effectiveness of our PHMS, this policy and our pest risk analysis.

Local grown stock

We will always try to ensure that our plants are grown as locally as possible and within the UK. We recognise that there are some plants that our customers demand, that are not available either locally or within the UK and in such cases our pest risk analysis and controls will determine whether these plants can be safely sourced or not.

Health and Safety

The company maintains an effective Health and Safety Management system and ensures that all plant health controls and treatments are carried out by suitably trained staff in a safe manner for both themselves and anyone else on the nursery.

Responsibilities

The Plant Health Manager, Simon Johnson, has overall responsibility for the PHMS, its implementation and communication to all relevant staff, along with the provision of all necessary training and resources. The Nursery Manager, Jess McCombie, is responsible for the monitoring and management of plant health on the nursery and deputises as Plant Health Manager where necessary. Full details of Plant Health roles and responsibilities are set out within the PHMS

Signed: Simon Johnson - Plant Health Manager

6th November 2021