Date: 16/11/2015

To: Importers of ash wood

Information Note on:


Introduction

This Information Note does not purport to be a legal interpretation of S.I. No. 479 of 2015 and is only issued for guidance purposes for those affected by recent changes made by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine to the legislation on the importation of ash wood into the country.

The new Order was signed into law with effect from 3rd November 2015.

The purpose of the Order is to update the measures to prevent the spread of the fungal pathogen *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (previously referred to as *Chalara fraxinea*) in the genus *Fraxinus* L., i.e. ash, to take account of new information on the risk associated with ash wood as a pathway for the disease and a change in the scientific name of the disease. It replaces the Destructive Insects and Pests Acts 1958 and 1991 (*Chalara fraxinea*) Order 2012 (S.I. No. 431 of 2012).

All persons operating in the wood importation and forestry sectors should familiarise themselves with the provisions of the Order. Copies of the Order can be purchased from Government Publications, 52 St. Stephen’s Green, Dublin 2. Phone 353-1-6476834 or e-mail: publications@opw.ie.

The Order can also be viewed at [www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie).

New requirements

The new Order restates the previous provisions contained in S.I. No. 431 of 2012 as they pertain to plant and plant products but introduce a number of important changes in relation to the importation of ash wood from countries where the disease is known to occur.

The restrictions on the importation or movement within the State of any ash wood infected with the *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* Ash dieback disease remain in place.
However, in future there will be no requirement for ash wood to be accompanied by a plant passport or an official statement stating that it originates in an area known to be free from the disease as an alternative to specified treatments. Instead, in future, all persons importing ash wood from countries where the disease is known to occur will be required to give two weeks’ notice of the intended importation to the Minister along with relevant particulars.

In addition to the notice, where the ash wood is of a large diameter (i.e. where the tree from which the wood derived when measured 1.3 metres from the ground was 10 centimetres or more in diameter) the treatment requirements have been reduced. As well as being free from infection\(^1\) the treatment requirements for ash wood of a large diameter will be that the wood is prepared so as to remove entirely –

(i) any branch or part thereof less than 10 centimetres in diameter, and
(ii) all leaves and foliage (whether living or dead).

Where the ash wood is of a small diameter (i.e. where the tree from which the wood derived when measured 1.3 metres from the ground was less than 10 centimetres in diameter) the wood will still be required to be either:

(i) squared so as to remove entirely the rounded surface, is bark-free, and the water content is less than 20% expressed as a percentage of the dry matter, or
(ii) if sawn, with or without residual bark attached, has undergone kiln-drying to below 20 % moisture content, expressed as a percentage of dry matter, achieved through an appropriate time and temperature schedule, with evidence thereof by a mark ‘Kilndried' or ‘KD' or another internationally recognised mark, put on the wood or on any wrapping in accordance with current usage.

Where a shipment of ash wood from countries where the disease is known to occur departed its Point of Export and is in transit to a Point of Entry into Ireland on or before the date of the law coming into effect, i.e. 3\(^{rd}\) November 2015, compliance with the requirements of S.I. 431 of 2012 or those of S.I. No. 479 of 2015 will be acceptable to the Minister.

It is also important to note that compliance with the requirements of S.I. 479 of 2015 does not absolve any person from the requirements of any other legislation in force which also relates to the importation of ash wood, for example those required under the EU Plant Health Directive (Council Directive 2000/29/EC).

\(^1\) Guidance on symptoms of the disease is available from the dedicated sections of the Department website: [http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestservice/ashdiebackchalara/](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestservice/ashdiebackchalara/)
Advance notifications and advice

Anyone intending to bring ash wood into Ireland must submit a Notification of Importation of Ash Wood Form to the Department. This form can be e-mailed to: forestprotection@agriculture.gov.ie.

Alternatively it can be faxed to 353-1-607-2545 or posted to:

Forest Service,
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine,
Agriculture House (3 West),
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2,
DO2 WK12.

This form is published on the Department’s website at: http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/forestservice/foresthealthandseeds/

For further information or advice concerning the above please contact the Forest Service at 353-1-607-2651 or e-mail forestprotection@agriculture.gov.ie.