



RHS GARDEN EVENTS BIOSECURITY POLICY & REGULATIONS 2024

(This applies to flower shows, horticultural competitions, private events, workshops and any other event taking place on sites owned and operated by the RHS)

Please read in full and refer to when sourcing plants for RHS Garden Events.

This document applies to living and cut plant material. In this document 'plants' means living plants (i.e. containerised, bare root, seeds, bulbs), cut flowers, cut foliage.

The RHS Biosecurity team carry-out plant health and compliance inspections at garden events. If required, plants may be removed at the discretion of the RHS. For questions relating to Biosecurity & Plant Health at RHS Garden Events please email: showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk

RHS Shows & Garden Events Biosecurity Policy (Abridged version)

At each RHS show and garden event, plants of all types, originating from the UK, Europe and other continents are brought together, posing a unique biosecurity risk. To mitigate this risk and protect UK wild plants, landscapes, wildlife and livelihoods the RHS has developed Biosecurity regulations specific to RHS shows and garden events. These are designed to minimise the risk of introducing harmful and invasive organisms to RHS shows and garden sites, and the threat of them spreading within and beyond a show or garden site.

Please note in this document and in legislation 'plants' means living plants and parts thereof, e.g. containerised, rootball, cut flowers, cut foliage, bare root, seeds, bulbs. For current information on Defra policy and legislation (including UK plant passports) please visit the Defra Plant Health Portal: planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk

For a copy of the full RHS Shows & Events Biosecurity Policy email: showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk

RHS Garden Events Biosecurity Regulations

All plants intended for use or sale at RHS Garden Events should be visibly free from pests and diseases, please adhere to the following guidance and regulations.

1.0 Movement of plants into and out of a garden site

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

Plants can be uncovered once arrived at the garden destination, i.e. 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 garden events manager and relevant RHS staff.

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.

1.1 NEW FOR 2024: Tobacco whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci*) & imported tender/ tropical/ sub-tropical plants

Tobacco whitefly feeds on over 800 plant species and is a vector for over 110 different plant viruses. In 2023 APHA recorded an increase in interceptions on imported tender/ tropical/ sub-tropical plants & cut flowers/ foliage.

Please be vigilant for this pest when sourcing imported tender/ tropical/ sub-tropical plants. Tobacco whitefly is a notifiable pest, if found it must be reported to APHA and the affected plants destroyed immediately. For images and more details of this pest visit:

planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/assets/factsheets/Bemisia-tabaci-Defra-Plant-Pest-Factsheet-Feb-2017-2.pdf

1.2 *Xylella fastidiosa* high-risk host plants (excludes cut and dried flowers & foliage)

Xylella fastidiosa is a bacterial disease of global concern due to the vast range of plants it can infect and kill. Preventing its arrival in the UK is of utmost importance as there is no cure.

- The following plants are temporarily prohibited from all RHS Garden Events:
***Olea europaea* (olive), *Nerium oleander* (oleander), *Polygala myrtifolia* (myrtle-leaf milkwort), *Coffea* spp. (coffee), *Spartium junceum* (Spanish broom)**
- The following plants must be in the UK for 12 months minimum (UK grown or imported) before being used at a garden event. They must also have a UK plant passport showing origin as GB, (see example):
***Lavandula* spp. (lavender), *Salvia rosmarinus* (syn. *Rosmarinus officinalis*) (rosemary), *Prunus dulcis* (syn. *Prunus amygdalus*) (almond), *Hebe* spp. (hebe)**

The letters GB will be shown in section D (see example), indicating the country of origin. A UK plant passport can be found on a pot label/ sticker or order paperwork.



1.3 *Fuchsia* spp. & *Fuchsia* gall mite

Plants of *Fuchsia* spp. can be used and/ or sold as long as free from symptoms of *Fuchsia* gall mite.

Fuchsia gall mite is present at all RHS garden sites. Plants of *Fuchsia* spp. brought onto a garden site are at risk of infestation. The owner of *Fuchsia* plants, brought onto a garden site, is responsible for this risk.

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

Plants of *Agapanthus* spp. can be used and/ or sold as long as free from symptoms of *Agapanthus* gall midge.

Agapanthus gall midge is present at all RHS garden sites. Plants of *Agapanthus* spp. brought onto a

garden site are at risk of infestation. The owner of *Agapanthus* plants, brought onto a garden site, is responsible for this risk.

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

Plants of *Buxus* spp. are prohibited from garden events at RHS Bridgewater, Harlow Carr and Rosemoor, where the moth is currently not found.

The moth is present at RHS Hyde Hall and Wisley. Plants of *Buxus* spp. can be used in displays but must not be sold to the public to prevent spread of the moth.

1.6 *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. Strict UK plant health regulations are in place to avoid the introduction of the virus and its mite vector.

Plants of *Rosa* spp. originating from USA, Canada, Mexico & India are prohibited from RHS garden events. It is recommended to only use UK or EU origin rose plants and cut roses.

1.7 Oak (*Quercus* spp.) & Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) (*Thaumetopoea processionea*)

OPM arrived in England 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 significant eye, skin and respiratory irritation.

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

RHS gardens Hyde Hall and Wisley sit within the OPM Established Area. All Oak (*Quercus*) species of any size are prohibited from both garden sites, to comply with UK legislation which prevents spread into the UK Pest Free Area (PFA).

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

1.8 Spruce (*Picea* spp.) & Larger Eight-toothed European Spruce Bark Beetle (*Ips typographus*)

Outbreaks of *Ips typographus* have occurred in Kent, Sussex and Surrey. The beetle is primarily associated with dead or weak trees, and will infest healthy trees if in high numbers. It is also a vector for a number of fungal tree diseases.

RHS gardens Hyde Hall and Wisley sit within the *Ips typographus* demarcated area. If using Spruce (*Picea*) species taller than 3m please declare this at showspanthealth@rhs.org.uk. This is to ensure that APHA inspect the Spruce before it leaves a garden site, as required by the Forestry Commission. Undeclared Spruce will not be able to leave a garden site until an inspection by APHA has been completed.

For further information visit: forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/pest-and-disease-resources/larger-eight-toothed-european-spruce-bark-beetle-ips-typographus/

1.9 Semi-mature trees, palms and tree ferns (Single stem or multi-stem, above 5m high and/or stem girth more than 20cm)

Semi-mature trees, palms and tree ferns have large canopies and root balls, and complex forms which can make it difficult to carry-out thorough plant health inspections, increasing biosecurity risk.

To mitigate biosecurity risk posed by semi-mature trees, palms and tree ferns (above 5m high and/or stem girth more than 20cm) please adhere to the following:

- Send a list of all semi-mature trees, palms and tree ferns being used to **showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk** (for risk assessment).
- Imported trees must be held and monitored by a nursery in the UK for at least three months prior to use at a garden event.
- Provide documentary evidence of country of origin and length of time in the UK, i.e. plant passports, delivery and invoice paperwork from the nursery.
- Ideally, use only fully UK grown trees, i.e. grown in the UK from UK seed or cutting material for the entire life of the tree.

2.0 UK plant passport scheme

The UK plant passport scheme is a crucial part of the UK's approach to plant biosecurity, ensuring traceability of plants in the event of a plant health issue.

The UK plant passport scheme must be followed by any person or business regularly growing, trading or supplying plants for business use. In legislation this is referred to as a professional operator, the RHS is an example of a professional operator.

- Plants sold to a customer on a garden event site for personal use (not business use) do not require a plant passport.
- Plants sold to a customer on a garden event site for business use require a plant passport.
- Plants ordered at a garden event which are later sent to a customer require a plant passport.
- Professional operators should retain plant passport records for 3 years.

Phytosanitary certificates: Imported plants require a phytosanitary certificate to ensure that legally required inspections and laboratory tests have been carried out before export.

Xylella high-risk hosts and plant passports: see 1.3 *Xylella fastidiosa* regulation.

2.1 Protected (includes CITES) and wild collected plants

Selling wild collected plants (e.g. plants, bulbs, corms, moss, etc.) at RHS Shows is strictly prohibited.

Please ensure they comply with CITES and other conservation legislation which is intended to protect plant species and the habitats in which they grow.

- Plant species listed under *Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* are protected by law and cannot be sold if wild collected. For the full plant list visit: legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/8
- CITES protected plant species used in an exhibit or offered for sale should be accompanied by relevant documentation. Export and import CITES permits may be required for imported plants, for further information visit: gov.uk/guidance/cites-imports-and-exports
- To check if a plant species intended for use is CITES regulated visit: speciesplus.net/#/

2.2 Non-native invasive plant species

Use or sale of non-native invasive plant species (any part of a plant) at RHS Garden Events must be in line with current UK legislation. Use or sale of plant species listed in the red table (see Addendum) is prohibited.

A few non-native invasive species can be used if demonstrated to be integral to a message or theme, see amber table (see Addendum). Please contact showspanthealth@rhs.org.uk and the garden events manager to request permission to use these plants. If use is agreed for an exhibit the plant must be clearly identified with information to explain its invasiveness.

The list of prohibited non-native invasive plants is taken from Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 for England and Wales, the EU Implementing Regulation 2016/1141 and the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019.

Addendum

2.2 Non-native invasive species reference list

Prohibited from sale or exhibit		Prohibited from sale or exhibit	
Scientific name	Common name	Scientific name	Common name
<i>Acacia saligna</i>	Golden wreath wattle	<i>Humulus scandens</i>	Japanese hop
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of heaven	<i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>	Pennywort, Floating
<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	Alligator weed	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Balsam, Himalayan
<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>	Broomsedge	<i>Lagarosiphon major</i>	Curly waterweed
<i>Asclepias syriaca</i>	Milkweed	<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i>	Chinese shrub clover
<i>Azolla filiculoides</i>	Fern, Water	<i>Ludwigia grandiflora</i>	Primrose, Water
<i>Baccharis halmifolia</i>	Tree Groundsel	<i>Ludwigia hexapetala</i>	Primrose, Water
<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	Carolina fanwort	<i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	Primrose, Floating Water
<i>Cardiospermum grandiflorum</i>	Balloon vine	<i>Ludwigia uruguayensis</i>	Primrose, Water
<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	Purple pampas grass	<i>Lygodium japonicum</i>	Climbing fern
<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Stonecrop, Australian Swamp; New Zealand Pygmyweed	<i>Lysichiton americanus</i>	American skunk cabbage
<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	Water hyacinth	<i>Microstegium vimineum</i>	Japanese stiltgrass
<i>Elodea nuttallii</i>	Nuttall's waterweed	<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	Parrot's Feather
<i>Ehrharta Calycina</i>	Perennial veldt grass	<i>Myriophyllum heterophyllum</i>	Broadleaf watermilfoil
<i>Gunnera tinctoria</i>	Chilean rhubarb	<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i>	Parthenium weed
<i>Gymnocoronis spilanthoides</i>	Senegal tea	<i>Pennisetum setaceum</i>	Crimson fountaingrass
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	Giant hogweed	<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>	Asiatic tear-thumb
<i>Heracleum persicum</i>	Persian hogweed	<i>Prosopis juliflora</i>	Mesquite
<i>Heracleum sosnowskyi</i>	Sosnowsky's hogweed	<i>Pueraria montana var. lobata</i>	Kudzu vine
		<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	Giant salvinia
		<i>Triadica sebifera</i>	Chinese tallow tree

Allowed if permission given	
Scientific name	Common name
<i>Elodea</i> spp.	Waterweeds
<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>	Knotweed, Japanese
<i>Reynoutria japonica</i> × <i>Reynoutria sachalinensis</i> [<i>R.</i> × <i>bohemica</i>]	Knotweed, Hybrid
<i>Reynoutria sachalinensis</i>	Knotweed, Giant