



Plant Health Policy

RHS Gardens Events

2023



RHS Registered Charity No. 222879 / SC038262

Plant health at RHS Garden events

The RHS is committed to adopting new, and improving existing, plant health practices across events within the RHS Gardens.

This RHS policy aims to minimise plant health risks and safeguard horticulture. It applies to all events taking place in the RHS Gardens where plant material is brought onto site for temporary use. This includes (but is not limited to) flower shows, plant fairs, workshops, meetings and private events where plant material is used e.g. weddings. 'Event' will be used throughout this document to indicate any of these occasions.

Plant health checks will be carried out on site and you may be asked to remove unhealthy plants or plants that do not meet RHS plant health policies. In the most serious cases, if a pest or disease of concern is found on your plants you may be prohibited from trading where applicable.

Organisers, exhibitors and other event participants are responsible for following this policy, and for disseminating this information to relevant other parties.

Overview of requirements:

- Comply with current UK plant health regulations (details in Section 1)
- Comply with RHS plant health policies (details in Section 2)
- Follow good plant health practices (details in section 3)
- Plant material must be visibly free from pests and diseases
- Use locally sourced material, if possible, to reduce the risk of introducing pests and diseases to our gardens; surrounding areas and new areas of the country.

Note: In this document we define GB grown plants as those:

- Grown in the UK for their entire life from GB origin propagation material (i.e. from seeds or cuttings from a UK origin mother plant)
- Or, if imported from outside the UK, having been grown in GB for **12 months minimum, since their import**

1. Plant health regulations (UK government level)

If importing or moving plants for an event at an RHS Garden, you must check the current UK plant health regulations in relation to the requirements for phytosanitary certificates, plant passports and pest free zones. Further information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-plants-and-plant-products>

Plant passports

Under the current UK plant health regulations most planting material must be accompanied by a full, valid UK plant passport if being moved within GB.

Exhibitors who qualify as professional operators who are moving material from another professional supplier to their own business site prior to moving to the event location will need to obtain a passport from that supplier. The exhibitor is not required to passport movement of the material to the event location, but it is recommended that the exhibitor has a copy of the original passport available for inspection if required.

A plant passport is not required for exhibitors who grow their own plant material and bring it to an event for display or educational purposes only, and/or to be sold to the general public face to face. An exception to this is for permitted high risk *Xylella* hosts (*Hebe* spp., *Lavandula* spp., *Prunus dulcis*, *Salvia rosmarinus*) where **plant passports must be provided** in order to prove that the plants are compliant with RHS policy.

Plant material must be accompanied by a plant passport if

- grown at the exhibitor's own business site and then moved to the event location for the purposes of trading to other professional operators; or
- being delivered by another professional supplier directly to the exhibitor at the event location.

Exhibitors or event coordinators should have the passports available for inspection if required.

2. RHS plant health policies

Planting on site

Planting on site is prohibited. Plant material brought into the RHS Gardens for an event must be containerised or held in such a way that doesn't involve planting into, or direct contact with the ground.

Transport of plant material in and out of RHS Gardens

In order to minimise the risk of introducing pests and diseases into RHS gardens, plant and plant material coming onto and transported within our sites must be contained (e.g. in a covered/ enclosed vehicle or sealed bags or boxes) until arrival at their destination within the garden including event sites and meeting rooms. Upon arrival at their destination they can be removed from containment and used as needed. Plant material should again be contained in order to leave through the site. To organise vehicle access to site please contact your RHS event organiser.

Upon the completion of the event, workshop or meeting, all remaining plant material or debris must be contained and removed from RHS premises as stated above.

Semi-mature trees

A semi-mature tree is defined as a tree with an overall height of 5m or more and / or stem girth measure of at least 20cm. The importation of semi-mature trees poses a significant plant health risk to the UK. The provenance of semi-mature trees intended for use in an RHS Garden event must be reported to the RHS Shows Biosecurity lead (showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk) in advance of arrival and should be:

- Sourced and grown in the UK (see Section 3 in this document)
- If imported, held and monitored in the UK for at least 3 months prior to use at the event.

Plant specific restrictions for the RHS gardens.

These restrictions aim to prevent the introduction of damaging pests and diseases into RHS Gardens where they are currently absent and where the garden holds valuable plant collections. The restrictions also aim to prevent further spread of these pests and diseases to areas of the country where they are considered absent. Where plants are permitted this is with specific conditions which are listed below the table.

	Bridgewater	Harlow Carr	Hyde Hall	Rosemoor	Wisley
<i>Agapanthus</i> spp.	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Buxus</i> spp. (Box)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Permitted*	Prohibited	Permitted*
<i>Coffea</i> spp. (Coffee)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Fuchsia</i> spp.	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Hebe</i> spp. (Hebe)	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Lavandula</i> spp. (Lavender)	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Nerium oleander</i> (Oleander)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Olea europea</i> (Olive)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Pinus</i> spp.	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Picea</i> spp. >3m tall	Permitted*	Permitted*	Prohibited	Permitted*	Prohibited
<i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> (Polygala)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited
<i>Prunus dulcis</i> (Almond)	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Quercus</i> spp.	Permitted*	Permitted*	Prohibited	Permitted*	Prohibited
<i>Rosa</i> spp. (plants and cut flowers)	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Salvia rosmarinus</i> (Rosemary)	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*	Permitted*
<i>Spartium junceum</i> (Spanish broom)	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited	Prohibited

*Permitted under specific conditions, see below

***Agapanthus* spp.** are hosts of the [agapanthus gall midge](#) (*Enigmadiplosis agapanthi*)

Agapanthus can be used in events at RHS gardens since the midge is widespread. Due to the risk of outward spread however, it is recommended that

- a) displays are created with cut flowers
 - b) plants with flowers are not sold to the public and that
 - c) after the event; the participant takes responsibility for destroying any flowering plant material.
- ***Buxus* spp.** as a host of the [Box tree moth](#) (*Cydalima perspectalis*) is prohibited from events and workshops in RHS Bridgewater, Harlow Carr and Rosemoor, where the

moth is currently not found. Box can be used in events at RHS Hyde Hall and Wisley, where the moth is present but due to the risk of outward spread of the moth, it is recommended that

- a) plants are not sold to the public and that
 - b) after the event; the participant takes responsibility for destroying the plant material.
- **Coffea spp.** Temporarily excluded from ALL RHS Gardens due to risk of [Xylella](#)
- **Fuchsia spp.** is a host of the [Fuchsia gall mite](#) (*Aculops fuchsiae*). The presence of the mite is noticeable when severe damage has occurred and plant destruction is the most efficient control measure. The mite is present in some areas of RHS Wisley but to avoid its onward spread and to protect the fuchsia planting surrounding the show ground on Seven Acres fuchsia is prohibited from events at RHS Wisley. At Rosemoor the mite is present in the surrounding area but absent from the garden and so bringing Fuchsia is not permitted to prevent onward spread of the mite. Fuchsia is also prohibited from events at Hyde Hall, Harlow Carr and Bridgewater, where important fuchsia specimens form part of the plant collections and where the mite is not widely spread in the surrounding areas.
- **Hebe spp.** A high risk host of [Xylella](#) but may still be exhibited if GB grown (as defined on pg. 2). Exhibitors who bring these plants to an RHS garden should expect to be asked to provide UK plant passports for the plants showing their origin (Section D on plant passport) as GB, proving that they have been in the UK for a minimum of 12 months.
- **Lavandula spp.** A high risk host of [Xylella](#) but may still be exhibited if GB grown (as defined on pg. 2). Exhibitors who bring these plants to an RHS garden should expect to be asked to provide UK plant passports for the plants showing their origin (Section D on plant passport) as GB, proving that they have been in the UK for a minimum of 12 months.
- **Nerium oleander.** Temporarily excluded from ALL RHS Gardens due to risk of [Xylella](#).
- **Olea europea.** Temporarily excluded from ALL RHS Gardens due to risk of [Xylella](#).
- **Quercus spp.** is a host of [Oak processionary moth](#) (*Thaumetopoea processionea*). Wisley is within the “established area” of the moth and undergoes OPM control while Hyde Hall garden is within the OPM infestation “control-buffer zone” and so, due to the risk of OPM infestation, the use of *Quercus* spp. is prohibited at RHS gardens Wisley and Hyde Hall. Use of Oak will only be permitted at an event in RHS Bridgewater, Harlow Carr or Rosemoor if grown in an OPM-free area of the UK.
- **Pinus spp.** is a host of the Pine processionary moth (*Thaumetopoea pityocampa*) and will only be permitted for use at an event in the RHS Gardens if GB grown (see pg. 2)

- ***Picea* spp.** is the host of [Ips typographus](#) a beetle currently under eradication by the Forestry Commission. There is currently a demarcated area in place in the SE of England which encompasses both Wisley and Hyde Hall. Movement restrictions on *Picea* wood, bark as well as trees > 3m tall are in place and so these cannot be brought to Wisley or Hyde Hall. *Picea* spp. wood, bark or trees > 3 m tall may be brought into the other gardens as long as they have not been originated from within the [demarcated area](#).
- ***Polygala myrtifolia***. Temporarily excluded from ALL RHS Gardens due to risk of [Xylella](#).
- ***Prunus dulcis* (syn. *Prunus amygdalus*)**. A high risk host of Xylella but may still be exhibited if GB grown (as defined on pg. 2). Exhibitors who bring these plants to an RHS garden should expect to be asked to provide UK plant passports for the plants showing their origin (Section D on plant passport) as GB, proving that they have been in the UK for a minimum of 12 months.
- ***Rosa* spp.** plants for planting and cut flowers are hosts of the highly invasive *Rose rosette virus* (RRV). There are strict UK plant health regulations in place to avoid the introduction of the virus and its mite vector (*Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*) from places where these occur (Canada, India, Mexico, and the USA). Using plants or flowers imported from these countries should be avoided at RHS garden events. It is strongly recommended to use UK grown plants and cut flowers for events in the RHS Gardens.
- ***Salvia rosmarinus* (syn. *Rosmarinus officinalis*)**. A high risk host of [Xylella](#) but may still be exhibited if GB grown (as defined on pg. 2). Exhibitors who bring these plants to an RHS garden should expect to be asked to provide UK plant passports for the plants showing their origin (Section D on plant passport) as GB, proving that they have been in the UK for a minimum of 12 months.
- ***Spartium junceum***. Temporarily excluded from ALL RHS Gardens due to risk of [Xylella](#).

The RHS will be collecting information related to the plant material coming into the RHS Gardens and will often carry out inspections prior to events. Plant material that does not comply with the policy will need to be removed from the event with responsibility for this laying with the plant owner (e.g. exhibitor, event organiser).

For more information about plant removal please contact the RHS Biosecurity team on the email addresses shown in section 4.

3. Good Biosecurity Practice

Everyone involved in horticulture should follow the principles of good practice in their working procedures:

- **Sourcing plants** – use trustworthy suppliers, check provenance and documentation. It is good biosecurity practice, in order to protect your business or garden, to always isolate plants when returning from events or when introducing new stock. When returning with plants from RHS events or workshops, if possible, keep plants in a separate area of your premises. Inspect the new growth of these plants regularly to check for signs of pests or diseases.
- **Monitoring** – inspect plants on arrival, hold in the UK for 3–12 months prior to use at events where possible in order to monitor for pests and diseases.
- **Clean working** – clean tools and boots between sites, use clean irrigation water, when undertaking tasks such as watering we recommend working from old to new (or newly returned) stock so as to reduce the risk of transmitting any pest or disease into your existing collections.
- **Management** – incorporate plant health into in-house training, establish a clear reporting procedure should problems occur.
- **Get involved with industry led plant health assurance schemes** – E.g. [Plant Healthy](#) or the Woodland Trust UK and Ireland Sourced and Grown Assurance Scheme (UKISG).

4. Contact information

Contacts	Contact email	Topic
Anna Platoni Plant Health Scientist & Shows Biosecurity lead	showsplanthealth@rhs.org.uk	Enquiries related to plant health policies at RHS Shows and events including in RHS gardens. <u>Pre-notification of semi-mature trees.</u>
Fryni Drizou Plant Health Scientist & Garden health lead	gardenhealth@rhs.org.uk	General plant health queries regarding RHS Gardens

Document control

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