



# The New Plant Health Regime

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# Existing EU Plant Health Law

- At EU level, responsibility for plant health lies with Directorate General Health & Food Safety (**DG Sante**).
- In collective terms, this legislation is commonly referred to as the **Community Plant Health Regime** (CPHR).
- EU plant health is currently legislated for within Council **Directive 2000/29/EC** (adopted 8th May 2000).
- This legislation was designed to protect European agriculture and forestry from the potentially damaging effects of non-native harmful organisms by stopping the entry into and spread of the same within the EU.

# Plant Health Regime Review



- **2008:** the EC asked the Commission to conduct an evaluation of the EU plant health regime
- **2010:** this review was completed. Key conclusions were:
  1. To focus more on prevention in light of increased imports of high risk commodities into the EU;
  2. For the prioritisation of harmful organisms at EU level across all MS;
  3. For better measures for controlling the presence and natural spread of harmful organisms which manage to enter EU territory;
  4. For modernised and upgraded measures central to control movement of plants within the EU, namely plant passports and protected zones
- **2013:** based on the 2010 recommendations, the Commission proposed a new EU Plant Health Law, as a key component of the Food and Feed Safety Package



# The New Approach: Smarter Rules for Safer Food

- Package of measures to strengthen the enforcement of health and safety standards for the whole agri-food chain.
- Modernised and simplified, more risked-based approach.
- The current body of EU legislation covering the food chain consists of almost 70 pieces of legislation.
- Will cut this down to only 5 pieces!

# Extensions to Scope

## Official Control Regulations Regulation 882/2004 Food & Feed Law

Animal  
health

Plant  
health

Plant  
reproductive  
material  
(including  
seeds)

Common  
Financial  
Framework

# Key elements of proposals



- More pro-active emphasis on prevention and preparedness
- Greater recognition of global context
- Risk targeted
- Need for public awareness of threats
- Need for partnership working between official services and other stakeholders
- Need for greater collaboration between Member States

# Plant Reproductive Material (including seeds)



- No longer in scope
- European Commission announced in December 2014 it would be undertaking no further work at this stage on PRM.
- PRM will probably need to be revisited but unlikely to be any implementation in near future



# Key elements of proposed new Plant Health legislation

- Faster decision making on new risks
- Better risk targeting
  - Regionalisation
  - Shift from produce to plants for planting
  - New & emerging trades
- More collaboration between inspectorates
- Prioritisation of regulated organisms



# Pest Prioritisation



Annual surveys  
Contingency plans

Regulated non-quarantine pests  
(‘quality pests’)

Priority pests  
( $<10\%$  of Q pests)

EU Q-pests  
(inc. some of the 250+  
transferred from old  
directive)

Protected Zone Q-pests  
(regional significance)



# Some Key Points of New PH Regulations



- More directed action when outbreaks occur
- Registration of companies ('Operators')
- Improved plant passporting - mandatory for all plants for planting
- Imports – allowed unless there is a proven risk
- Phytosanitary certificates - required for all living plants (and parts of)
- Extension of 'TRACES' database
- Designation of Plant Health EURLs

# Requirements of EURLs *(Article 91)*



- Designation will:
  - Follow a public selection process
  - Be **limited in time and with a minimum of five years** or reviewed regularly
- EURLs will:
  - Operate in accordance with the standard **EN ISO/IEC 17025**
  - Be impartial and **free of conflict of interests** as regards the exercise of their tasks as EURLs
  - Have appropriate confidentiality obligations in place

# Requirements Continued....



- Have or **have contractual access** to suitably qualified and trained **staff** and **support staff** as appropriate;
- Possess or have access to the **infrastructure, equipment** and **products** necessary to carry out their assigned tasks
- Ensure that their **staff** have a good knowledge of
  - international standards and practices
  - the latest research developments at national, EU and international level
- Be equipped or have access to the necessary equipment to perform their tasks in emergency situations
- Be equipped to comply with relevant biosecurity standards

# Tasks & Responsibilities *(Article 92)*



- EURLs shall contribute to the **improvement and harmonisation of methods of analysis, test or diagnosis to be used by official laboratories** and of the analytical, testing and diagnostic data generated by them.
- EURLs shall be responsible **for the following tasks insofar as they are included in the reference laboratories' annual or multiannual work programmes** established in conformity with the **objectives and priorities** of the **relevant work programmes adopted** by the Commission.
- EURL shall publish the **list of the NRLs** designated by the MS.

# EURL Tasks



- Provide NRLs with **details and guidance of methods** of laboratory analysis, test or diagnosis, including reference methods
- **Provide reference materials to NRLs**
- Organise regular inter-laboratory comparative testing **or proficiency tests**
- **Coordinate** practical arrangements necessary to **apply new methods**
- Conducting **training** courses for the benefit of **staff from NRLs (and others as/if required)**
- Provide scientific and technical **assistance to the Commission**
- **providing information on relevant research activities to NRLs**
- Collaborate with **laboratories in third countries and others e.g. EFSA**
- **Assist with the diagnosis of outbreaks in MSs** by carrying out confirmatory diagnosis, characterisation etc

## Tasks Continued.....

- Co-ordinate or perform tests to verify the quality of reagents and/or lots of reagents used for the diagnosis
- Establish and maintain reference collections of **pests of plants** and/or **reference strains of pathogenic agents**;
  - *EURL may establish and maintain reference collections and reference strains by contractual outsourcing to other official laboratories and to scientific organisations*
  - *Only directly linked to their remit*
- Up-to-date **lists of available reference substances and reagents** and of manufacturers and suppliers of such substances and reagents.

# Timetable: Current Position



- Plant Health: EC position was agreed at Coreper in July and approval given for submission to trilogue
- Negotiations will start in September with the aim of agreeing the Regulation by end December?
- If there is a final decision on the plant health proposal by end 2015, regulations come in to force mid/late 2016
- Three - five year transition period
- Implementation by **2018 earliest (2019-20 realistic?)**

