



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Animal &
Plant Health
Agency



Forestry Commission

Plant Health – international trade and controlled consignments, 2014-2018

These statistics present an analysis of international trade in plant and plant commodities¹ (including live plants, fruit, vegetables and cereals) – covering both the financial value and the physical scale (mass) of this trade. This release also presents an analysis of the notifications of controlled commodities – i.e., where checks are carried out to ensure that traded goods meet required standards. Data cover the period 2014 to 2018 (Forestry Commission data cover 2014/15-2018/19). Geographical coverage is specified at the start of each section.

Key findings



During the period 2014-2018 the overall value of trade in plants and plant commodities increased while the net mass decreased. Such trends were not always linear due to the volatile nature of the trade, which can be affected by climate events, pest and disease and other factors.



In 2018, imports accounted for 90.3 per cent of all trade value and 84.5 per cent of net mass of trade in plants and plant commodities.



The value of trade in plant and plant commodities between the UK and the European Union increased between 2014 and 2018, however the corresponding net mass decreased. The value of trade with non-EU countries increased while the net mass remained stable between 2014 and 2018.



In 2018, over 109,000 consignments of controlled material were notified to the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), an increase of just under 30 per cent since 2014. Over half of these consignments originated in Africa.



In 2018/19, over 3,900 consignments of controlled material were notified to the Forestry Commission. The number of consignments was slightly higher (+50) than in 2014/15 while the volume of material in the consignments also increased (+68,487m³).

¹ Includes raw products and those that can be defined as 'simply processed'. Please see the glossary at the end of this document and the associated quality and methodology report for more information.

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Introduction

Plants are environmentally, economically, and socially important, providing a vital contribution to our food and timber supply and to the rural economy. Plants also perform an essential ecosystem service in shaping the landscape and supporting biodiversity and they have been linked to improved health and wellbeing².

The globalisation of trade has facilitated an increase in the volume and diversity of plants and plant commodities which enter the UK. This trade generates economic value but also needs to be regulated (controlled), noting the links, along with other factors³, to increased risk of pest and disease. Hence plant health legislation⁴ controls the import and movement of certain plants, trees, seeds and organic matter - such as soil - and certain plant products, including fruit, potatoes, vegetables, cut flowers, timber, foliage and grain.

The analysis below explores both the overall UK trade in plants and plant commodities, and also the trade in controlled plant health and forestry commodities which informs the inspections undertaken by the Plant Health and Seed Inspectorate (PHSI) and the Forestry Commission (FC) to prevent plant pests and diseases from entering England and Wales, and, for Forestry Commission, Scotland⁵.

Please note that the three datasets explored in this publication are not directly comparable. There are key differences in how each dataset is compiled and these are outlined further in the accompanying quality and methodology report.

Experimental Statistics

This statistical release is intended as a contribution to increasing wider understanding about trade in these commodities and about plant health. It is designed to provide stakeholders, internal and external to government, with information on the patterns of trade over time for a specific set of

² [NHS Forest - Evidence of Benefits](#)

³ [Plant biosecurity strategy for Great Britain](#)

⁴ [Tree health legislation](#) and [Plant health controls](#)

⁵ Plant Health is devolved thus Scotland carries out its own plant health inspections.

commodities. The primary aim is to facilitate discussion and aid decision making around biosecurity.

The release is not intended for the purpose of drawing inferences as to the effectiveness of plant health and forestry inspectorates.

New statistical releases are classified as experimental statistics in order to secure feedback from users – for example about the long-term need for the information (the user value) and the technical fitness for purpose (the quality). If you have any comments or feedback on this release – or about other needs for formal statistics in policy areas of trade and biosecurity - please contact: sam.grant@defra.gov.uk. Sam Grant, Plant Health Statistics, Horizon House, Deanery Rd, Bristol BS1 5TL.

Further information on experimental statistics can be accessed here: [GSS Guidance on Experimental Statistics](#)

Trade in plants and plant products

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) compiles statistics on commodities physically leaving and entering the UK, traded with both European Union (EU) Member States and non-EU countries. Non-EU trade is collected from customs declarations. EU trade is collected via Intrastat which covers VAT-registered businesses whose annual value of arrivals and/or dispatches exceeds a given exemption threshold⁶.

Although not collected for plant health purposes the HMRC data does allow us to examine the patterns of trade for a sub-section of commodities, i.e., raw and simply processed plants and plant commodities, and to group these into categories. The categories covered in this release are:

- Plants and planting material. This category includes bulbs, plants for planting, forest tree seed and cut flowers.
- Food and crops. This category includes fruit, vegetables, cereals, nuts, herbs and spices.
- Forestry: This category includes timber (unprocessed or simply processed: sliced, planed or chipped), packing cases, casks and barrels.

⁶ Information on methodology and quality for HMRC overseas trade statistics can be accessed at: [HMRC trade statistics - policies and methodologies](#)

Table 1: Value of trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, 2014-2018

million pounds

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to	Percentage change 2014 to
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
Imports							
Plants and planting material	1,200	915	1,018	1,045	1,003	-197	-16.4
Food and crops	8,292	8,067	8,981	9,857	9,742	1,450	17.5
Forestry	1,887	1,637	1,708	1,933	2,070	183	9.7
Total	11,379	10,619	11,707	12,835	12,815	1,435	12.6
Exports							
Plants and planting material	101	91	103	119	123	21	21.1
Food and crops	1,170	1,254	1,494	1,112	1,065	-105	-9.0
Forestry	154	142	144	170	186	32	21.1
Total	1,425	1,487	1,742	1,401	1,374	-51	-3.6
All trade							
Plants and planting material	1,302	1,006	1,122	1,164	1,126	-176	-13.5
Food and crops	9,461	9,321	10,475	10,970	10,806	1,345	14.2
Forestry	2,041	1,779	1,852	2,103	2,256	215	10.5
Total	12,804	12,106	13,449	14,237	14,188	1,384	10.8

a. Data are calendar year.

b. See glossary for information on sectors

c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

Table 1 shows the total value of trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, between 2014 and 2018.

- The total value of trade in plants and plant commodities has shown a broad upward trend over the time period however the level remained similar in 2017 and 2018. Trade in plants and planting material was the only sector to show a decrease in total trade, despite the value of exports in this sector (£123m) being at the highest of the time period in 2018.
- The import value of the plants and planting materials sector has remained around £1bn for the last three years, following a drop from the high level (£1.2bn) recorded in 2014.
- The total value of exports of plants and plant commodities decreased from £1,425m to £1,374m between 2014 and 2018. This was driven by a decrease in the value of the food and crops sector where exports over the last two years were at the lowest level of the time period.

Table 2: Net mass of trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, 2014-2018

thousand tonnes

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to	Percentage change 2014 to
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
Imports							
Plants and planting material	443	347	351	388	358	-85	-19.3
Food and crops	12,854	11,889	11,707	12,939	13,077	223	1.7
Forestry	4,558	4,107	4,154	4,321	4,521	-38	-0.8
Total	17,855	16,343	16,212	17,647	17,955	100	0.6
Exports							
Plants and planting material	47	36	44	55	48	0	1.0
Food and crops	3,821	5,059	6,229	3,031	2,487	-1,334	-34.9
Forestry	1,227	1,091	784	809	761	-466	-38.0
Total	5,095	6,186	7,057	3,895	3,296	-1,799	-35.3
All trade							
Plants and planting material	491	384	395	443	406	-85	-17.3
Food and crops	16,675	16,949	17,937	15,970	15,564	-1,111	-6.7
Forestry	5,785	5,198	4,938	5,130	5,281	-504	-8.7
Total	22,951	22,530	23,269	21,542	21,251	-1,700	-7.4

a. Data are calendar year.

Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

b. See glossary for information on sectors

c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Table 2 shows the total net mass of trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, between 2014 and 2018.

- All sectors saw a decrease in the net mass of trade over the period 2014-2018 with plants and planting materials seeing the greatest decrease (-17.3 per cent) despite the net mass of exports for this sector remaining at a similar level in 2018 as in 2014.
- During the time period 2014 to 2018, the total net mass of imports remained fairly stable but the net mass of exports decreased by around a third.
- Decreases in the net mass of imports in the plants and planting material and forestry sectors were offset by a small increase in the net mass of food and crops imports meaning overall import levels remained fairly stable over the time period.
- The net mass of exports of plants and plant commodities decreased to 3,296 thousand tonnes in 2018 after reaching a high of 7,057 thousand tonnes in 2016 (35.3 per cent decrease between 2014 and 2018).

Figure 1: Changes in trade of plants and plant commodities, 2014-2018

Change in imports of plants and plant products, 2014-2018

Change in exports of plants and plant products, 2014-2018

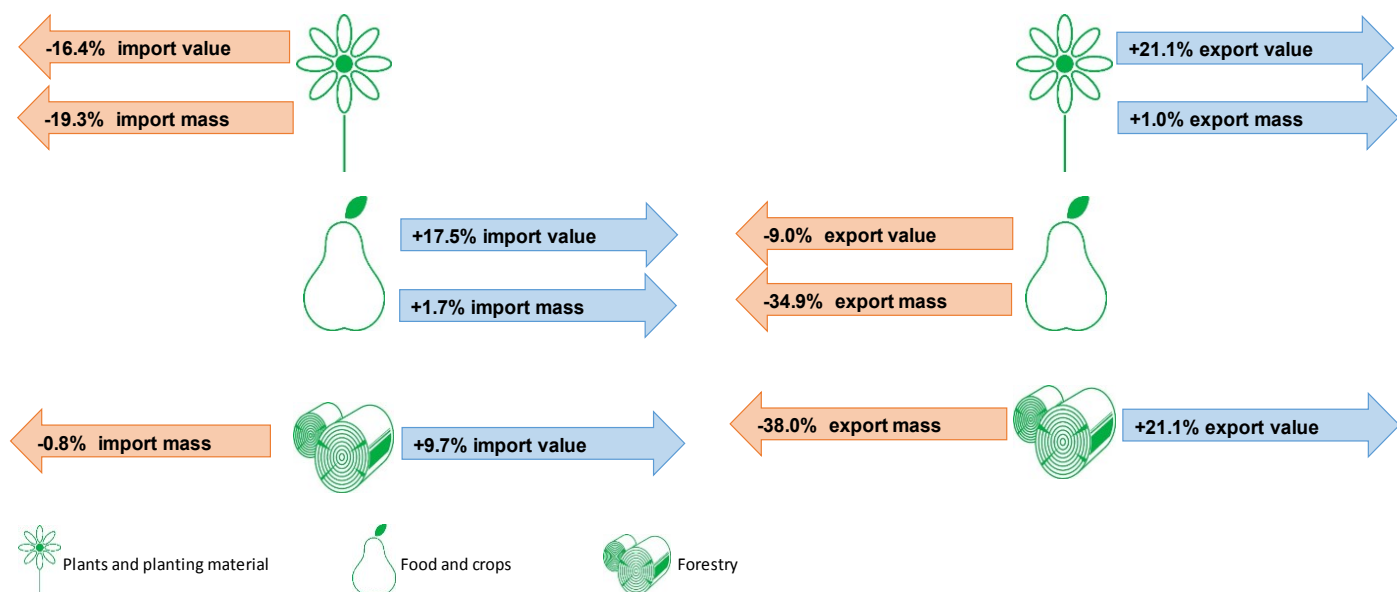


Table 3: Value of UK-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, 2014-2018

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to	Percentage change 2014 to
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
EU Imports							
Plants and planting material	1,012	737	838	858	811	-202	-19.9
Food and crops	4,230	3,884	4,306	4,679	4,670	440	10.4
Forestry	1,448	1,181	1,262	1,480	1,628	180	12.4
Total	6,690	5,803	6,406	7,016	7,108	418	6.2
EU Exports							
Plants and planting material	82	70	82	92	96	14	17.7
Food and crops	880	921	1,124	914	888	8	0.9
Forestry	124	104	110	132	147	23	18.8
Total	1,086	1,095	1,315	1,138	1,132	46	4.2
All EU trade							
Plants and planting material	1,094	807	920	950	907	-187	-17.1
Food and crops	5,110	4,805	5,430	5,593	5,558	448	8.8
Forestry	1,572	1,285	1,372	1,611	1,775	203	12.9
Total	7,776	6,898	7,722	8,154	8,240	464	6.0

a. Data are calendar year.

Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

b. See glossary for information on sectors

c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Table 3 shows the value of commodities that are imported into the UK from the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to the EU, by sector.

- In 2018, the total value of trade with the EU and also the total value of EU imports were at their highest levels during the time period 2014 to 2018. With the exception of imports and

total trade in the sector of plants and planting material, all sectors and trade flows have seen an increase in the value of EU trade since 2014.

- The value of EU imports in the plants and planting material sector decreased by around one fifth over the time period.
- Total values for each trade flow (import/export/all) increased by between 4.2 and 6.2 per cent over the time period, however this masks larger changes in individual sectors, for example, the export value of both the forestry and plants and planting materials sectors increased by around 17-19 per cent over the time period.

Table 4: Net mass of UK-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, by sector, 2014-201

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to		Percentage change 2014 to	
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018				
<i>thousand tonnes</i>									
EU Imports									
Plants and planting material	357	276	283	326	293	-64	-18.0		
Food and crops	6,949	6,384	5,959	6,338	6,376	-573	-8.2		
Forestry	3,965	3,492	3,548	3,803	3,988	23	0.6		
Total	11,270	10,152	9,790	10,467	10,657	-613	-5.4		
EU Exports									
Plants and planting material	37	30	37	32	41	4	11.8		
Food and crops	2,708	3,604	4,473	2,646	2,164	-544	-20.1		
Forestry	1,175	1,024	725	723	678	-497	-42.3		
Total	3,919	4,657	5,236	3,401	2,883	-1,036	-26.4		
All EU trade									
Plants and planting material	393	306	320	358	334	-60	-15.2		
Food and crops	9,657	9,988	10,432	8,984	8,540	-1,116	-11.6		
Forestry	5,139	4,516	4,274	4,526	4,666	-473	-9.2		
Total	15,189	14,809	15,025	13,868	13,540	-1,650	-10.9		

a. Data are calendar year.

Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

b. See glossary for information on sectors

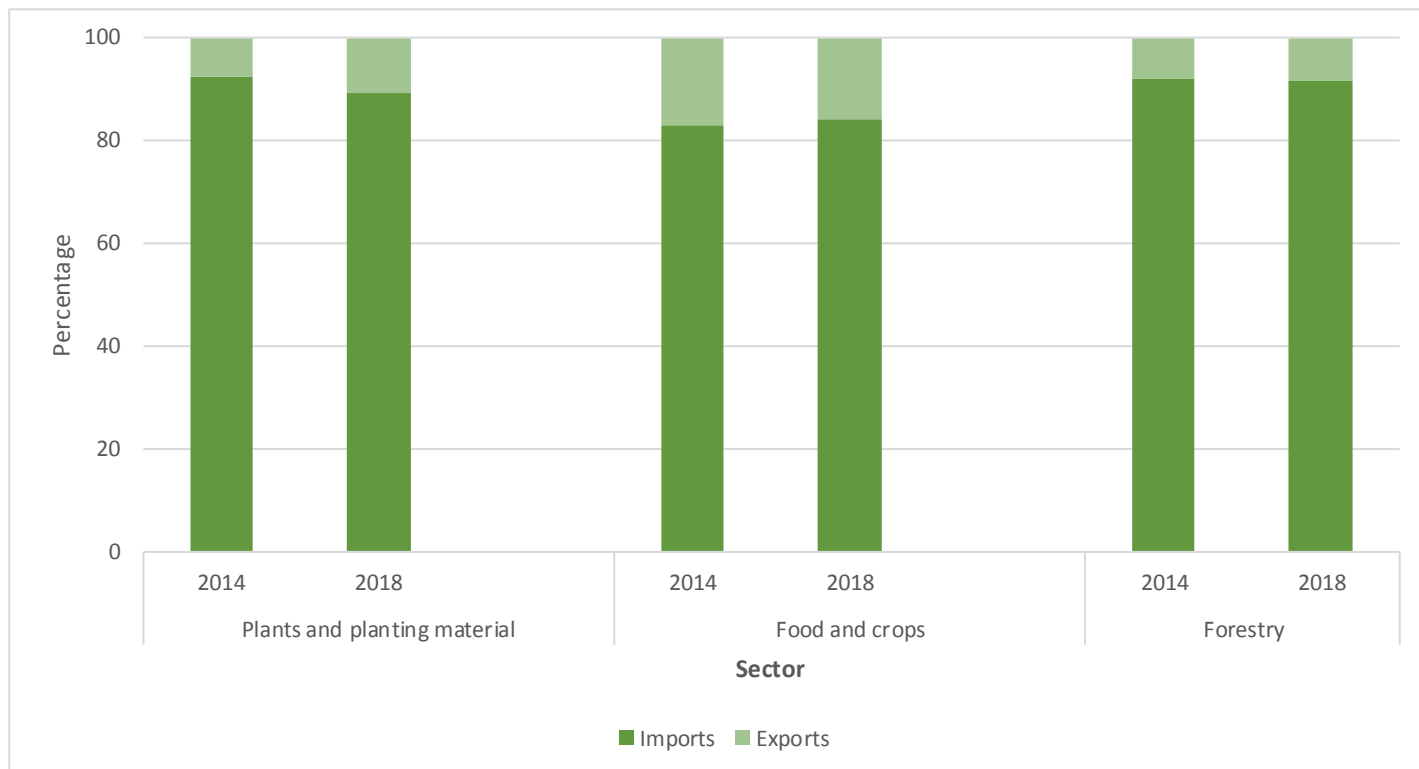
c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Table 4 shows the net mass of commodities that are imported into the UK from the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to the EU, by sector.

- All sectors experienced a decrease overall in total EU trade, with levels 10.9 per cent lower in 2018 than in 2014.
- The total net mass of imports of plants and plant commodities from the EU decreased slightly between 2014 and 2018 (-5.4 per cent) with forestry the only sector where import net mass remained stable.
- The total net mass of exports of plants and plant commodities to the EU was at its lowest level of the time period in 2018 (2,883 thousand tonnes), standing at just over half of the net mass seen in 2016 (5,236 thousand tonnes). Plants and planting materials was the only sector to see an increase in the net mass of exports (+4 thousand tonnes) during the time period.

Chart 1a and 1b: Distribution of UK-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, 2014-2018

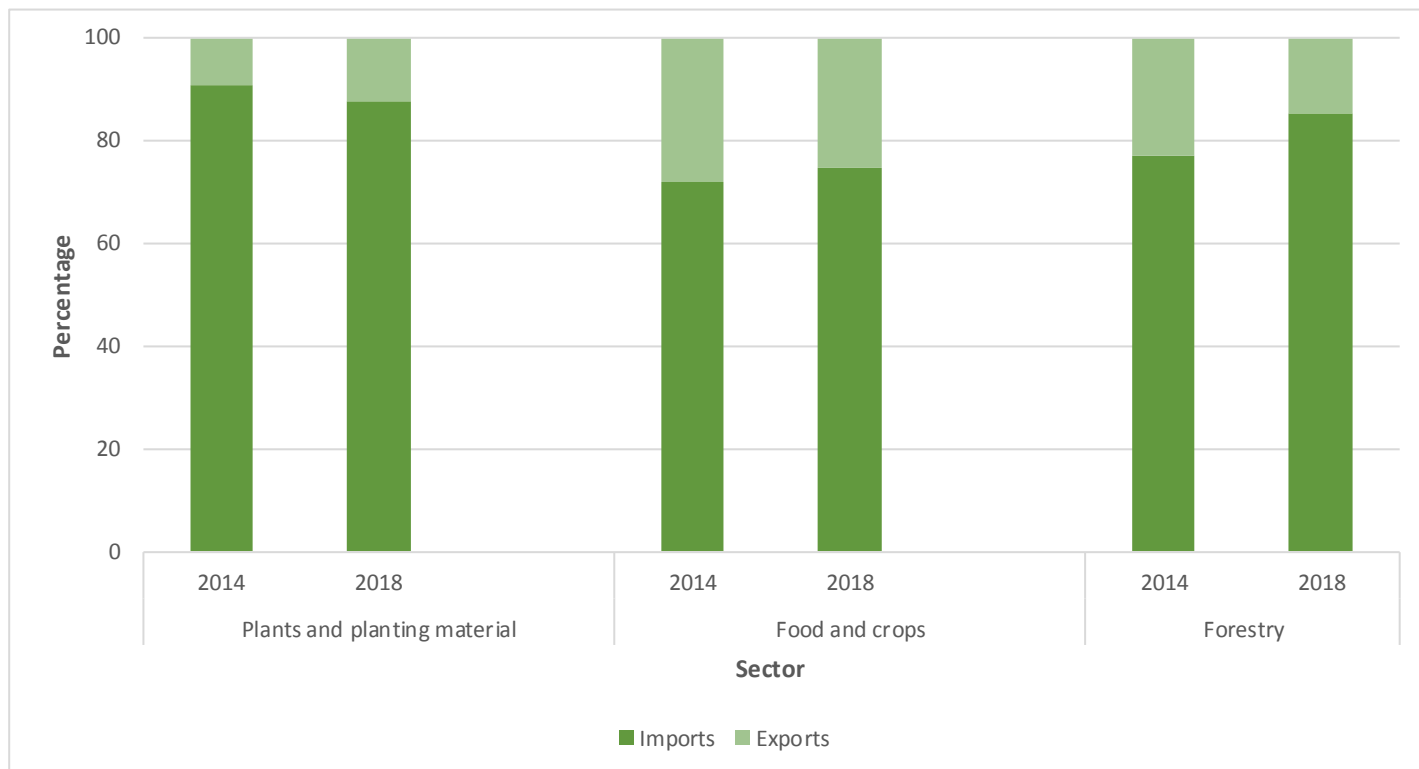
1a. Value



Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Charts 1a and 1b show commodities that are imported into the UK from the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to the EU.

1b. Net mass



Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Charts 1a and 1b show commodities that are imported into the UK from the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to the EU.

- The proportion of EU trade value that was imports was higher for plants and planting material and forestry (over 90 per cent) than for food and crops (over 80 per cent).

- The proportion of trade value in food and crops that was imports increased between 2014 and 2018 (+1.2 percentage points) whilst the proportion of trade that was imports of plants and planting material or forestry decreased slightly (-3.1 and -0.4 percent respectively).
- In terms of the net mass of EU trade, the picture was similar for plants and planting material as for value. For both food and crops and forestry the proportion of net mass that was imports was lower than for their respective trade value however forestry showed a 8.3 percentage point increase between 2014 and 2018.

Table 5: Value of UK-non-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, 2014-2018

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to	Percentage change 2014 to
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
<i>million pounds</i>							
Non-EU Imports							
Plants and planting material	188	178	180	187	193	5	2.4
Food and crops	4,062	4,183	4,675	5,178	5,072	1,010	24.9
Forestry	439	456	446	453	442	3	0.6
Total	4,689	4,817	5,301	5,819	5,706	1,018	21.7
Non-EU Exports							
Plants and planting material	20	20	22	26	27	7	35.4
Food and crops	289	333	370	199	176	-113	-39.2
Forestry	30	38	34	39	39	9	30.8
Total	339	392	427	263	241	-97	-28.7
All non-EU trade							
Plants and planting material	208	199	202	213	219	11	5.5
Food and crops	4,351	4,516	5,045	5,377	5,248	897	20.6
Forestry	469	494	480	492	481	12	2.5
Total	5,028	5,208	5,727	6,082	5,948	920	18.3

a. Data are calendar year.

Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

b. See glossary for information on sectors

c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

Table 5 shows the value of commodities that are imported into the UK from countries outside of the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to these non-EU countries, by sector.

- The total value of non-EU trade increased for all sectors between 2014 and 2018. For the food and crops sector, the total trade value increased by around one fifth despite a decrease in the value of exports (-39.2 per cent since 2014).
- The 2018 non-EU export value of £176m in the food and crops sector was less than half of the value for this sector in 2016 (£370m).
- The value of non-EU imports in the forestry and plants and planting material sectors remained fairly stable over the time period 2014-2018 whilst the value of exports in both sectors increased.

Table 6: Net mass of non-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, 2014-2018

Sector ^b	Year ^a					Value change 2014 to	Percentage change 2014 to
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018		
Non-EU Imports							
Plants and planting material	86	71	68	62	65	-21	-24.7
Food and crops	5,905	5,505	5,748	6,601	6,700	795	13.5
Forestry	594	615	606	517	532	-61	-10.3
Total	6,585	6,191	6,422	7,180	7,298	713	10.8
Non-EU Exports							
Plants and planting material	11	7	7	23	7	-4	-35.3
Food and crops	1,113	1,455	1,756	385	323	-790	-71.0
Forestry	52	67	58	86	83	31	59.2
Total	1,176	1,529	1,822	494	413	-763	-64.9
All non-EU trade							
Plants and planting material	97	78	75	85	72	-25	-25.9
Food and crops	7,018	6,961	7,505	6,986	7,024	5	0.1
Forestry	646	682	664	604	615	-31	-4.7
Total	7,761	7,721	8,244	7,674	7,711	-50	-0.6

a. Data are calendar year.

b. See glossary for information on sectors

c. Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding

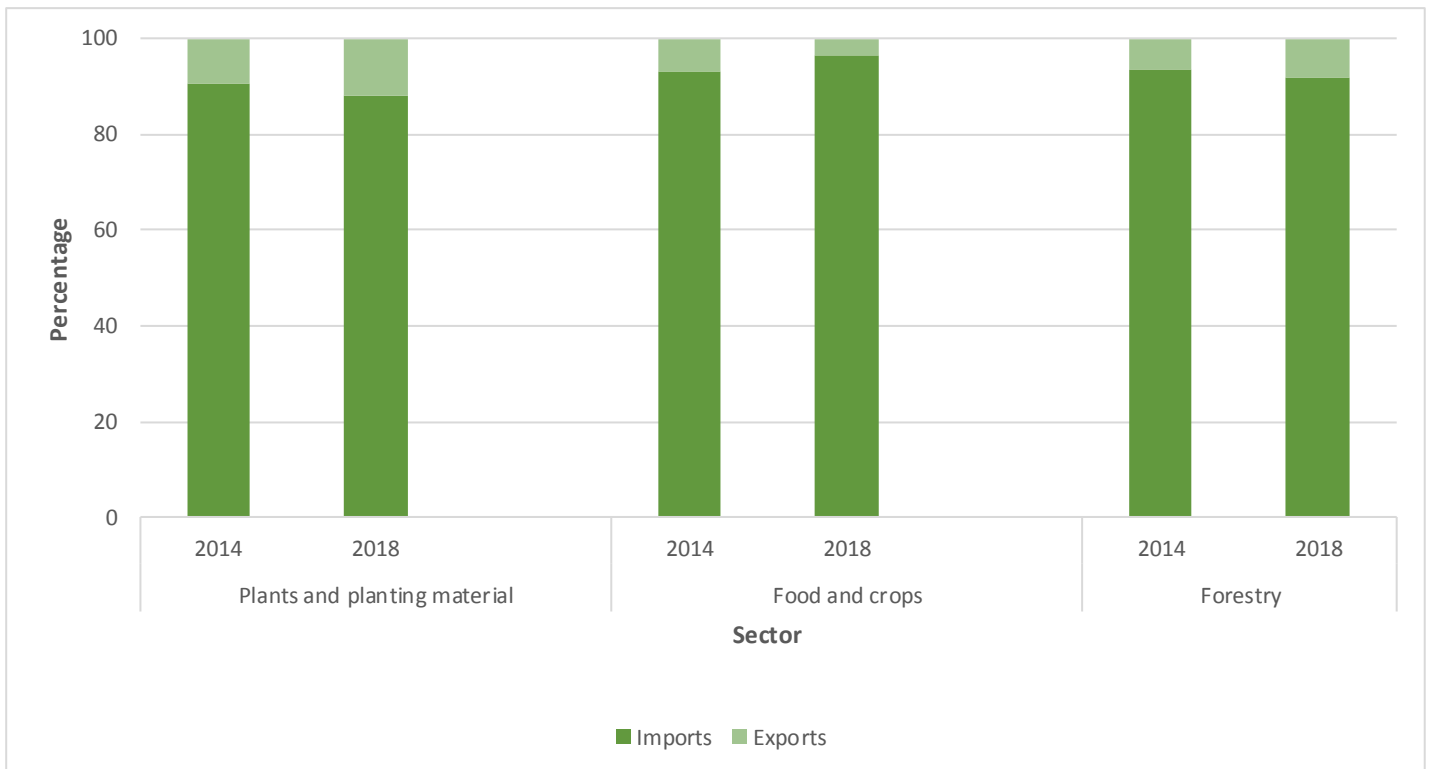
Source: HM Revenue & Customs: Overseas Trade In Goods Statistics

Table 6 shows the net mass of commodities that are imported into the UK from countries outside of the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to these non-EU countries, by sector.

- Overall, the net mass of the non-EU annual trade in plants and plant commodities remained fairly stable between 2014 and 2018 at around 7,700 thousand tonnes. The exception to this was in 2016 when net mass reached a peak of 8,244 thousand tonnes.
- In 2018, the total net mass of non-EU imports of plants and plant commodities was at its highest level of the time period with 7,298 thousand tonnes of commodities imported. This was driven by an increase in the net mass of imports in the sector of food and crops while both the plants and planting material and forestry sectors experienced decreases in net mass.
- The net mass of non-EU exports in the food and crops sector was over 5 times lower in 2018 than in 2016, when net mass was at its highest level of the time period, and over three times lower than in 2014. The decrease was largely driven by decreases in the net mass of wheat, meslin and barley, exported during 2018 and may reflect the weather conditions at the time as well as consumption in the UK during that period.

Chart 2a and 2b: Distribution of UK-non-EU trade in plants and plant commodities, 2014-2018

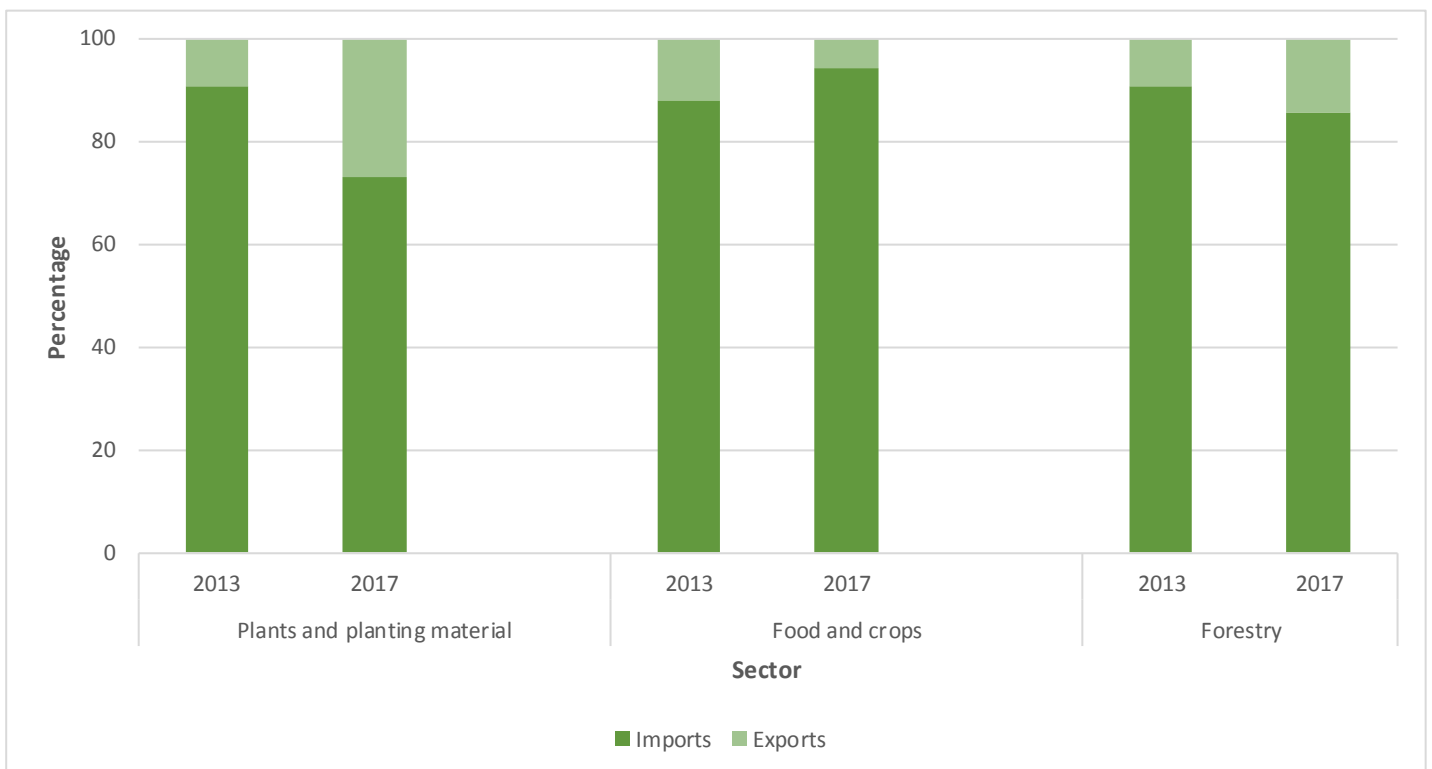
2a. Value



Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Charts 2a and 2b show commodities that are imported into the UK from countries outside of the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to these non-EU countries.

2b. Net mass



Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Charts 2a and 2b show commodities that are imported into the UK from countries outside of the EU and commodities that are exported from the UK to these non-EU countries.

- Imports accounted for over 90 per cent of all non-EU trade value in all sectors in 2014. In 2018 imports as a proportion of the trade in a sector had increased for food and crops (+3.3 percentage points) but decreased for plants and planting material (-2.7 percentage points) and for forestry (-1.7 percentage points).
- The net mass of non-EU trade saw imports increase their share of trade in the sectors of plants and planting material and food and crops. For the food and crops sector the share of trade that was imports increased by 11.3 percentage points from 84.1 per cent in 2014 to 95.4 per cent in 2018.

Figure 2: Changes in trade of plants and plant commodities between 2014-2018, by area



Controlled Commodities⁷

The Plant Health and Seed Inspectorate (PHSI) implements and enforces plant health policy in England and in Wales (on behalf of the Welsh Government). The Forestry Commission (FC) implements and enforces plant health policy in England and Scotland, and in Wales via Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

PHSI and FC carry out inspections of controlled plant materials, including plants for planting. The controls of such materials differ according to the species - and what quarantine organisms they may carry – but may include phytosanitary certificates, plant passports and/or physical inspection. Information on the volume of inspections is available in the annual Multi Annual National Control Plan⁸. Information covering interceptions of material that does not meet EU phytosanitary requirements is published in the annual Europhyt⁹ report.

Plants, fruit, vegetables and plant material from outside the EU¹⁰ fall into 3 categories:

- ‘unrestricted’ material you can bring to the UK without any conditions;
- ‘controlled’ material that you can only bring into the UK with a ‘phytosanitary certificate’ to show it meets the requirements for entry to the EU;

⁷ [EU COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2000/29/EC](#)

⁸ [Food Standards Agency - Multi-Annual National Control Plan](#)

⁹ [EUROPHYT - Interceptions Annual Reports](#)

¹⁰ [Guidance on importing plants, fruit, vegetables, cut flowers and other regulated objects to the UK](#) and [Guidance on importing wood, wood products or bark from non-EU countries](#)

- ‘prohibited’ material you can’t bring into the UK unless you get a scientific research licence or an exception (‘derogation’) to the rules.

Moving controlled plants or plant commodities in the EU¹¹ requires a plant passport with which commodities can move freely within the EU. Inspections of relevant businesses are carried out ‘in field’, generally between 2 and 4 times per year, depending on the business’s risk to plant health.

For trade with countries outside of the EU, plant health checks are made at approved points of entry into Great Britain (England and Wales for PHSI, England, Wales and Scotland for FC). To gain approved status, a port or airport authority must provide certain minimum conditions necessary to ensure that inspections can be carried out efficiently and safely and, in the event that it becomes necessary, relevant material can be treated or destroyed.

The analyses below focuses on consignments of commodities classed as controlled and originating outside the EU and arriving at points of entry in Great Britain (England and Wales for PHSI, England, Wales and Scotland for FC). These consignments are subject to inspection activities ranging from document checks to physical inspections. The level of checks required for different types of commodities can be considered as full (100 per cent) or reduced¹². In addition, emergency measures¹³ can be introduced which may restrict trade due to changes in import requirements. All controlled Forestry commodities are required to be checked (100 per cent).

Controlled commodities are a subset of the trade analysis shown above (which also includes unrestricted commodities), however data are not comparable to that provided by HMRC due to differences in measurement units, geographies and purpose. More information can be found in the accompanying quality and methodology report.

Plant Health and Seed Inspectorate

The Plant Health and Seed Inspectorate (PHSI) is part of the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and implements and enforces plant health policy in England, and in Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government. PHSI carry out inspections of plants, seeds, bulbs, cut flowers, planting materials, fruits and vegetables. They also inspect agricultural machinery for export however such trade is not covered in this analysis.

It is important to note that changes in the number of consignments may be influenced by changes in trade patterns as well as by legislative changes. Factors which can contribute to changes in trade patterns include climate events, changes in market demand, social unrest or change, pest outbreaks etc. Controls may be applied to any number of countries where there is a pest risk but additionally countries may apply self-prohibition if they are aware of a pest issue in their country. Where self-prohibition is applied there are no formal reporting routes and often information cannot be confirmed.

Some key bans thought to have affected imports to the UK were:

¹¹ [Guidance on issuing plant passports to trade plants in the EU](#)
[Guidance on importing and exporting wood and timber products](#)

¹² [EU reduced frequency checks](#)

¹³ [EU emergency control measures by species](#)

- India: Colocasia Schott and plants other than seeds of Momordica L., Solanum melongena L. and Trichosanthes L. and Mangifera were banned from 24/04/2014 until 31/12/2016 with the exception of Trichosanthes L. and Mangifera for which the ban was lifted in February 2016.
- Ghana: Capsicum L., Lagenaria Ser., Luffa Mill., Momordica L. and Solanum L., other than S. lycopersicum L. were banned from 13/10/2017 until 31/12/2017.
- Trade in fresh curry leaves was stopped from 26/04/2014 due to countries outside of the EU being unable to meet EU requirements.
- EU Directive 2017/1279 requires tomatoes originating from all third countries (outside the EU but including Canary Islands, Ceuta, Melilla and the French Overseas Departments) and pomegranates originating from countries of the African continent, Cape Verde, Saint Helena, Madagascar, La Reunion, Mauritius and Israel to be imported with a phytosanitary certificate.
- There has been self-imposed bans from Thailand, Bangladesh and Vietnam.

New controls being introduced may also impact trade patterns. For example, decision 2014/78 required all imports of Capsicum to become regulated as from 1st Oct 2014. The decision also included the application of controls on some other commodities.

Table 7: Number of controlled consignments, by commodity type, 2014-2018

Year ^a	Commodity type ^b				Total
	Plants and planting material	Fruit	Vegetables	Other commodities	
2014	26,272	43,825	12,438	1,792	84,327
2015	27,512	44,352	22,761	2,522	97,147
2016	28,802	47,542	24,357	2,476	103,177
2017	27,534	47,919	24,550	2,196	102,199
2018	27,948	55,280	23,478	2,474	109,180
Value change 2014-2018	1,676	11,455	11,040	682	24,853
Percentage change 2014-2018	6.4	26.1	88.8	38.1	29.5

a. Data are calendar year.

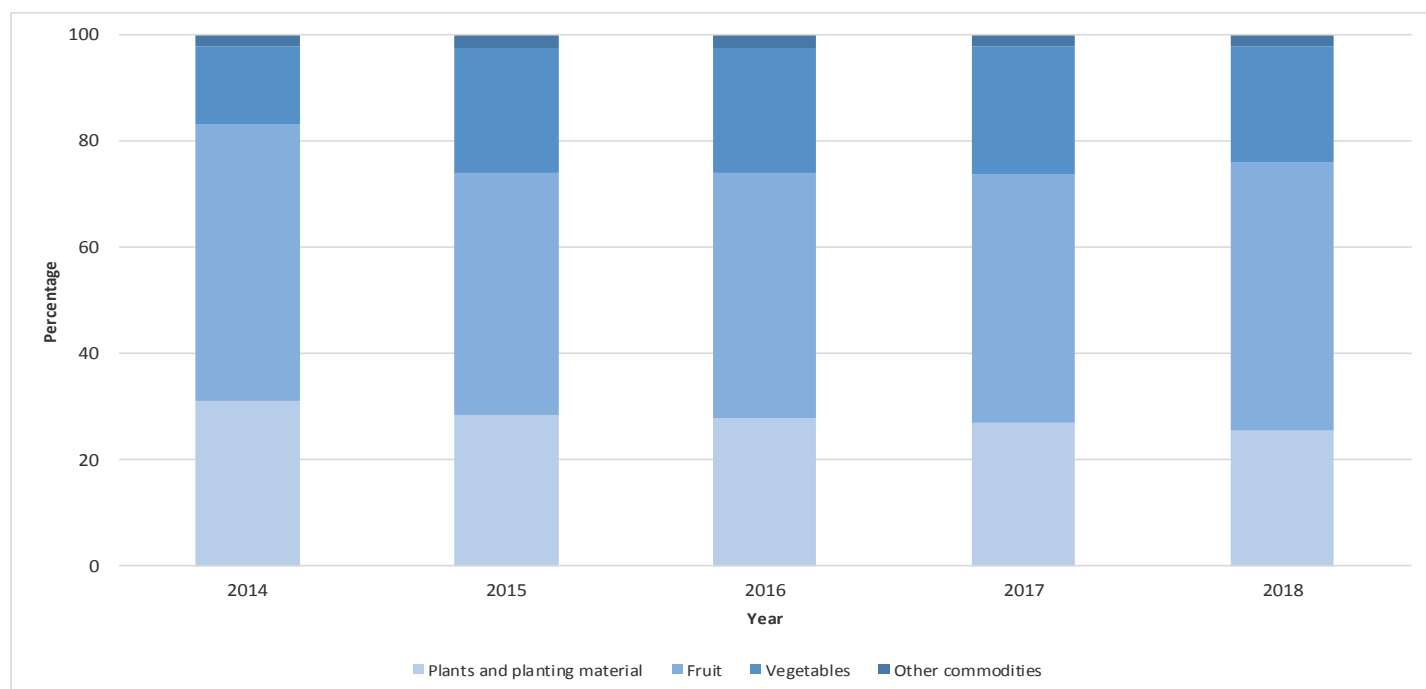
Source: Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

b. See glossary for information on commodity types.

Table 7 shows the number of controlled consignments notified to PHSI, by commodity type.

- Overall, the number of controlled consignments increased by 29.5 per cent with increases across all groups of commodities between 2014 and 2018.
- Between 2014 and 2018 the number of controlled consignments of vegetables increased by 88.8 per cent despite a small decrease between 2017 and 2018. The largest increase was seen between 2014 and 2015 and was likely the result of controls on capsicum coming into force.
- The number of controlled consignments of fruit increased by over a quarter (26.1 per cent) with this type of product experiencing year-on-year increases.

Chart 3: Controlled consignments by commodity type, 2014-2018



a. Data are calendar year.

Source: Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

b. See glossary on notes tab for information on sectors

- Controlled consignments of fruit accounted for around half of all consignments in 2018 while plants and planting material accounted for a further quarter.
- The proportion of controlled consignments that were vegetables increased by 6.8 percentage points between 2014 and 2018 whilst the proportion that were plants and planting material decreased by 5.6 percentage points.

Table 8: Number of controlled consignments, by region of origin, 2014-2018^a

Year ^a	Region ^b					Total
	Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe (non-EU)	Oceania	
2014	44,620	21,940	15,395	102	2,270	84,327
2015	52,679	20,335	21,695	96	2,342	97,147
2016	54,720	21,321	24,934	122	2,080	103,177
2017	54,998	21,354	23,361	121	2,365	102,199
2018	59,315	22,980	23,520	1,076	2,289	109,180
Value change 2014-2018	14,695	1,040	8,125	974	19	24,853
Percentage change 2014-2018	32.9	4.7	52.8	954.9	0.8	29.5

a. Data are calendar year.

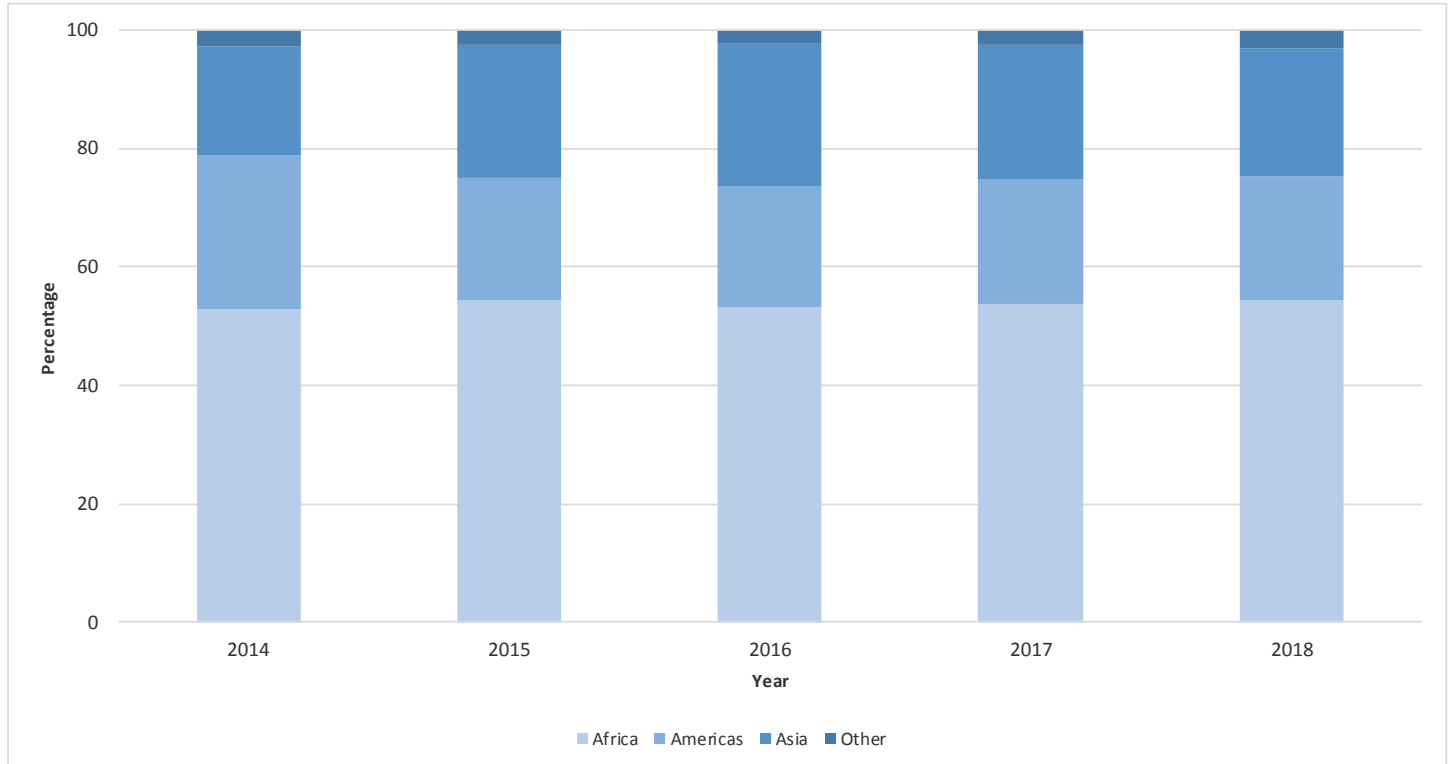
Source: Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

b. Tables uses UNSD geographies: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>

Table 8 shows the number of controlled consignments notified to PHSI, by region of origin.

- Controlled consignments from European (non-EU) countries were over 10 times higher in 2018 than in 2014. This followed the introduction of controls on tomatoes from non-EU countries as of January 2018.
- Controlled consignments originating in Asia increased by over 50 per cent between 2014 and 2018 however levels remained fairly stable in 2017 and 2018.
- Trade from the Americas and from Oceania has remained fairly stable over the time period 2014 to 2018 while trade from Africa has shown a year-on-year increase.

Chart 4: Controlled consignments by region of origin, 2014-2018



a. Data are calendar year.

Source: Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate

b. Chart based on UNSD geographies: [UN Statistics Geographies](https://www.un.org/development/desa/locations/)

- Controlled consignments originating in Africa represented over half of all controlled consignments in each year shown.
- The Americas and Asia were each responsible for around one fifth of all controlled consignments in 2018. The proportions of controlled consignments for Asia increased (+3.3 percentage points) since 2014 while decreasing for the Americas (-5.0 percentage points).

Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission (FC) are responsible for inspections of timber, including sawn timber, wood shavings, wood chips, sawdust and prefabricated buildings made of wood being imported to England, Scotland and Wales. The Forestry Commission are also responsible for inspections of wood packaging and controlled firewood¹⁴ however these trades are not covered in this release.

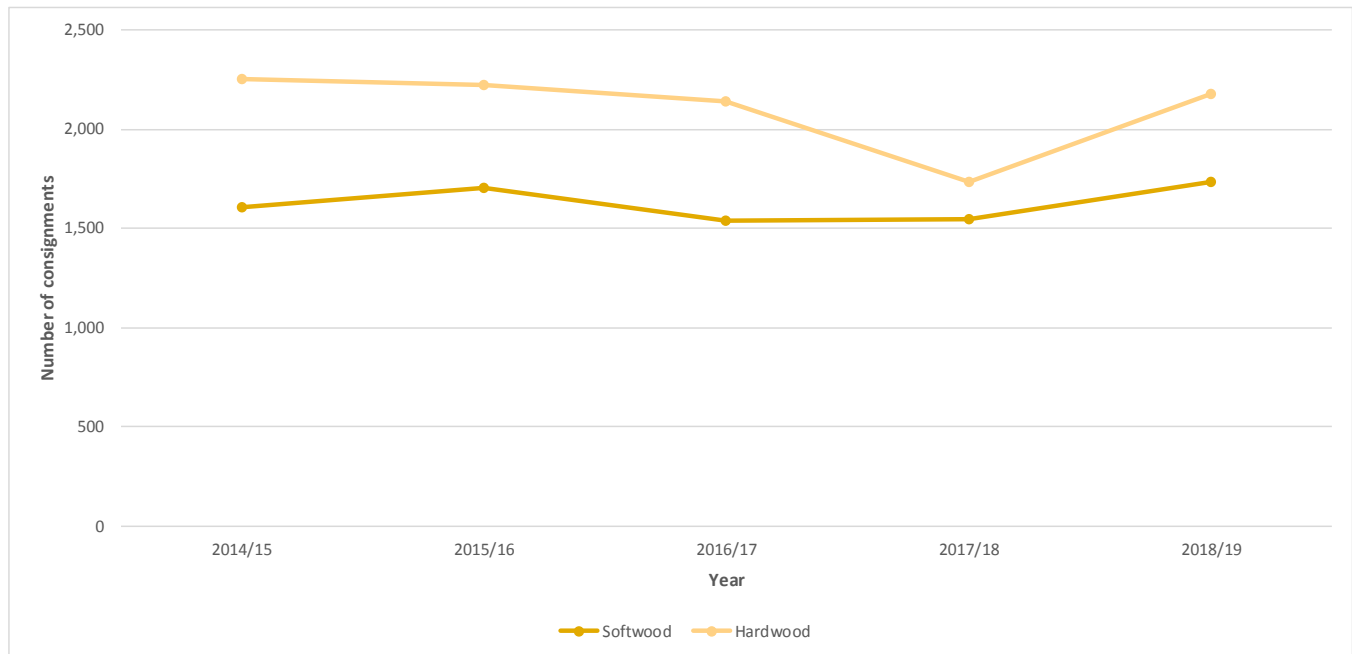
¹⁴ [Guidance on importing firewood](#) and [Guidance on importing or exporting wood packaging material](#)

Controlled forestry commodities are required to undergo full checks (100 per cent) thus the number of consignments is also the number of inspections.

It is important to note that changes in the number of consignments may be influenced by changes in trade patterns as well as by legislative changes. Factors which can contribute to changes in trade patterns include climate events, changes in market demand, social unrest or change, pest outbreaks etc. Controls may be applied to any number of countries where there is a pest risk but additionally countries may apply self-prohibition if they are aware of a pest issue in their country.

Chart 5a and 5b: Controlled consignments by timber type, 2014/15-2018/19

5a Number of consignments

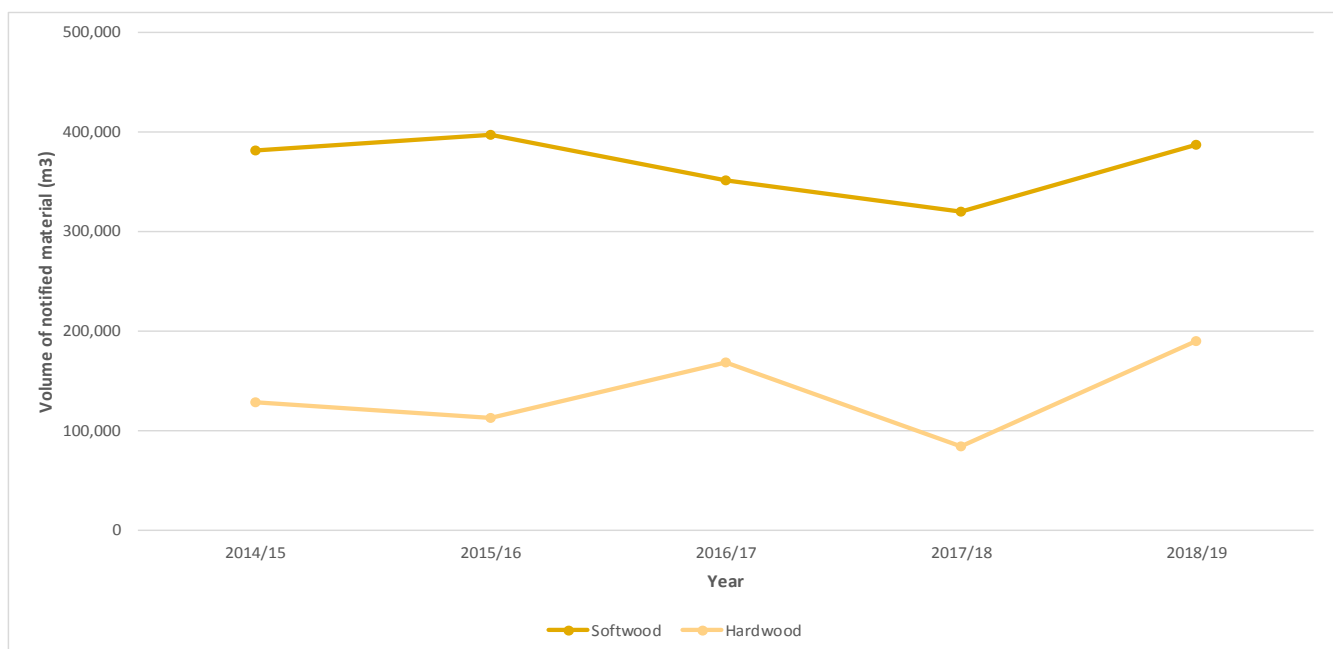


a. Data are financial year.

Source: Forestry Commission

b. See glossary on notes tab for information on sectors

5b. Volume of material



a. Data are financial year.

Source: Forestry Commission

b. See glossary on notes tab for information on sectors

- The number of controlled consignments of hardwood saw a year-on-year decrease from 2,256 in 2014/15 to 1,738 in 2017/18 before increasing to 2,175 in 2018/19. The number of controlled consignments of softwood increased from 1,604 to 1,735 over the time period.
- The volume of material in controlled consignments of hardwood increased from 128,195m³ in 2014/15 to 190,337m³ in 2018/19 while softwood increased from 381,028m³ in 2014/15 to 387,373m³ in 2018/19.
- Hardwood consignments accounted for 58.4 per cent of all controlled consignments in 2014/15 but decreased to 55.6 per cent in 2018/19.
- The volume of hardwood accounted for around 25.2 per cent of the total volume of controlled consignments in 2014/15 but increased to 32.9 per cent in 2018/19.

Table 9: Controlled consignments of softwood, by region of origin, 2014/15-2018/19^a

	Year ^a					Value change 2014-2018	Percentage change 2014-2018
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19		
Number of consignments							
Africa	0	0	0	0	4	4	n/a
Asia	0	*	8	15	13	13	n/a
Australia and New Zealand	22	19	13	21	49	27	122.7
Central and South America	39	52	32	32	41	2	5.1
North America	1,102	1,169	1,030	1,108	1,036	-66	-6.0
Europe ^c	441	466	453	367	592	151	34.2
Total	1,604	1,706	1,536	1,543	1,735	131	8.2
Volume of notified product (m³)							
Africa	0	0	0	0	200	200	n/a
Asia	0	*	278	532	392	392	n/a
Australia and New Zealand	945	704	529	876	2,629	1,684	178.2
Central and South America	4,310	4,556	3,259	2,574	4,162	-148	-3.4
North America	97,255	84,479	59,684	58,041	53,315	-43,940	-45.2
Europe ^c	278,518	307,223	287,685	257,789	326,675	48,157	17.3
Total	381,028	396,962	351,435	319,812	387,373	6,345	1.7

a. Data are financial year

b. Tables uses UNSD geographies: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>

c. Non-EU countries

d. * indicates data are disclosive and have been removed from the table

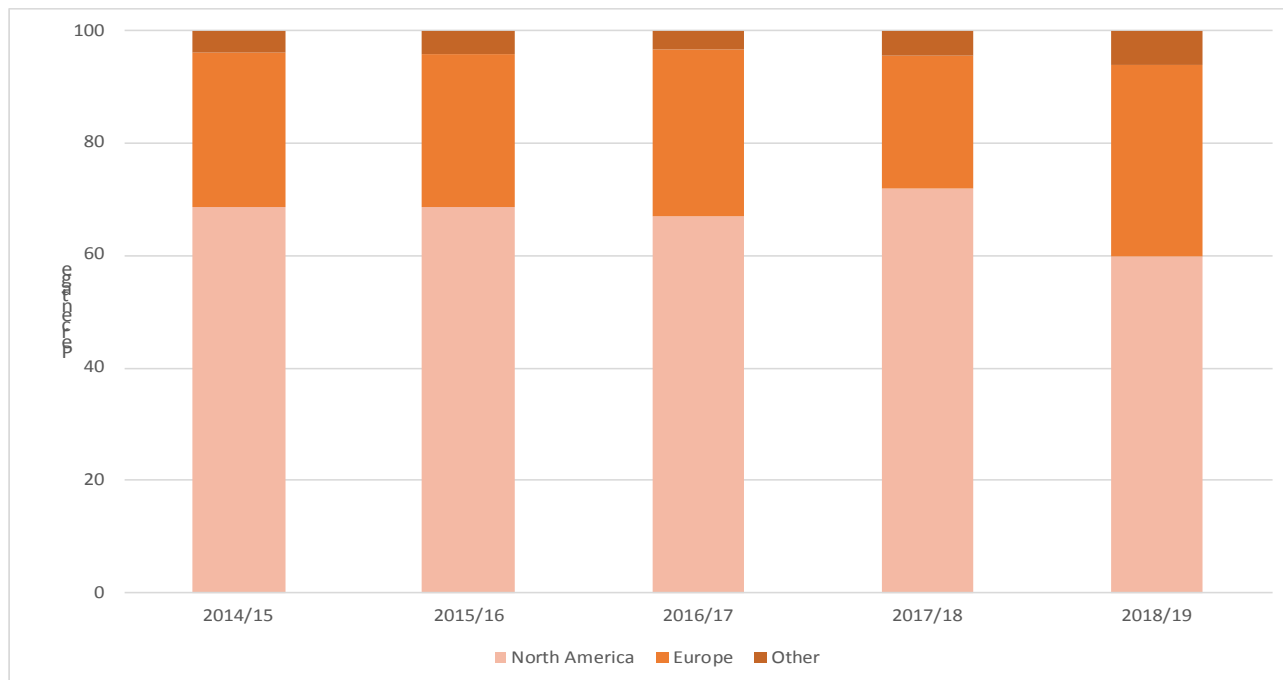
Source: Forestry Commission

Table 9 shows the number of controlled consignments and the volume of material notified to FC, by region of origin.

- In 2018/19 there were 1,735 controlled consignments of softwood, the highest number of the time period. The volume of controlled material in 2018/19 was slightly lower than the high of 396,962m³ seen in 2015/16, standing at 387,373m³.
- In 2014/15 there were 1,102 controlled softwood consignments originating in North America however this fell to 1,036 in 2018/19. The volume of softwood associated with these consignments also fell, from 97,255m³ in 2014/15 to 53,315m³ in 2018/19.
- In contrast, controlled softwood consignments from Europe increased from 441 in 2014/15 to 592 in 2018/19 with a corresponding increase in volume from 278,518 m³ to 326,675m³.

Chart 6a and 6b: Softwood consignments and volume, by region of origin, 2014/15-2018/19

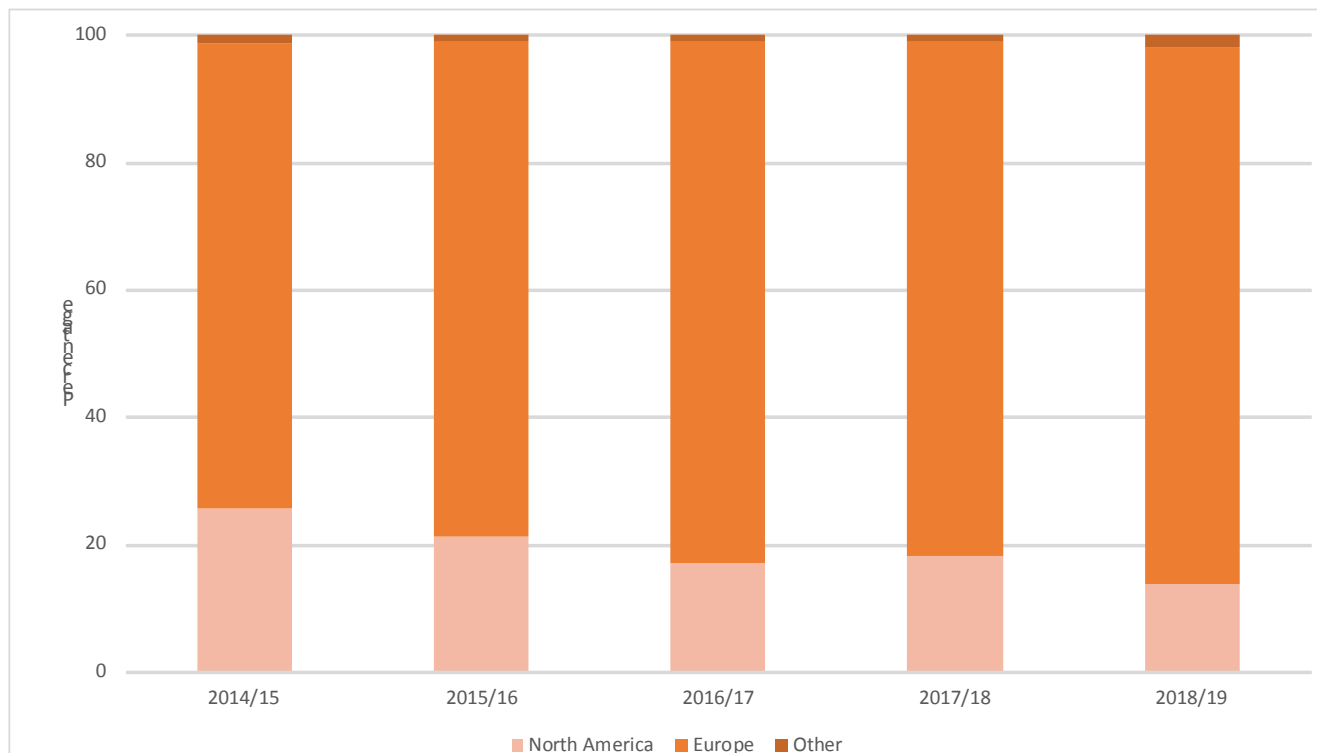
6a. Softwood consignments



- a. Data are calendar year.
- b. Chart based on UNSD geographies: UN Statistics Geographies
- c. Europe includes non-EU countries only.

Source: Forestry Commission

6b. Softwood volume



- a. Data are calendar year.
- b. Chart based on UNSD geographies: UN Statistics Geographies

Source: Forestry Commission

Across the time period shown, the highest proportion of controlled softwood consignments originated in North America however the highest proportion of total softwood volume originated in Europe. This may reflect broader aspects of trade such as efficiency of the supply chain with smaller, but more numerous, consignments coming from North America.

- The proportion of controlled softwood consignments originating in North America stood at 68.7 per cent in 2014/15 but had decreased to 59.7 per cent in 2018/19. Despite the high number of consignments, the volume of softwood material from North America accounted for only 25.5 of all controlled softwood in 2014/15, falling to 13.8 per cent in 2018/19.
- In contrast, controlled softwood consignments from Europe accounted for 27.5 per cent of all consignments and 73.1 per cent of all volume in 2014/15 increasing to 34.1 per cent of all consignments and 84.3 per cent of all volume in 2018/19.

Table 10: Controlled consignments of hardwood, by region of origin, 2014/15-2018/19^a

	Year ^a					Value change 2014-2018	Percentage change 2014-2018
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19		
Number of consignments							
North America	2,253	2,224	2,137	1,737	2,164	-89	-4.0
Europe ^c	3	0	0	*	11	8	266.7
Total	2,256	2,224	2,137	1,737	2,175	-81	-3.6
Volume of notified product (m³)							
North America	128,098	113,305	168,403	83,472	189,544	61,446	48.0
Europe ^c	97	0	0	*	793	696	717.5
Total	128,195	113,305	168,403	83,472	190,337	62,142	48.5

a. Data are financial year

b. Tables uses UNSD geographies: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>

c. Non-EU countries

d. * indicates data are disclosive and have been removed from the table

Source: Forestry Commission

- The volume of controlled hardwood increased from 128,195m³ to 190,337m³ during the period 2014/15 to 2018/19 despite a small drop in the number of consignments (2,256 to 2,175).
- Almost all controlled consignments of hardwood originated in North America.
- The number of controlled consignments from North America decreased from 2,253 in 2014/15 to 2,164 in 2018/19 however the volume of material associated with these consignments increased from 128,098m³ to 189,544m³ during the time period.

Table 11: Controlled consignments of oak and ash timber, 2014/15-2018/19^a

	Year ^a					Value change 2014-2018	Percentage change 2014-2018
	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19		
Number of consignments							
Ash	379	362	329	285	335	-44	-11.6
Oak	1,778	1,747	1,681	1,330	1,562	-216	-12.1
Total	2,157	2,109	2,010	1,615	1,897	-260	-12.1
Volume of notified product (m³)							
Ash	13,288	13,141	13,538	10,537	11,531	-1,757	-13.2
Oak	57,120	55,305	109,695	41,524	140,852	83,732	146.6
Total	70,408	68,446	123,233	52,061	152,383	81,975	116.4

a. Data are financial year.

Source: Forestry Commission

Ash originating in Canada, China, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Russia, Taiwan and USA and Oak (*Quercus suber*) originating in the USA are controlled and account for the majority of controlled hardwood imports.

- Oak and Ash accounted for 87.2 per cent of controlled hardwood consignments in 2018/19, having decreased from 95.6 per cent in 2014/15. These two species accounted for 80.1 per cent of the volume of controlled hardwood in 2018/19, an increase from 54.9 per cent in 2014/15.
- Oak accounted for 71.8 per cent of controlled hardwood consignments and 74.0 per cent of controlled material in 2018/19, a decrease from 2014/15 in controlled consignments (from 78.8 per cent) but an increase in the volume of controlled material (from 44.6 per cent).

Glossary¹⁵

Commodity: A type of plant, plant product, or other article being moved for trade or other purpose [FAO, 1990; revised ICPM, 2001]

Consignment: A quantity of plants, plant products or other articles being moved from one country to another and covered, when required, by a single phytosanitary certificate (a consignment may be composed of one or more commodities or lots) [FAO, 1990; revised ICPM, 2001]. For PHSI data a consignment is a commodity type declared on a phytosanitary certificate. Some phytosanitary certificates will cover more than one commodity type and so the number of consignments declared will be more than the number of phytosanitary certificates.

Controlled plant products: plants and plant commodities which are required to undergo checks for pest and disease on crossing a customs border. For countries within the European Union (EU) this means upon entry to the EU while for countries.

Country of origin: Country where the plants were grown [FAO, 1990; revised CEPM, 1996; CEPM, 1999]

Customs declaration: an official document that lists and gives details of goods that are being imported or exported. In legal terms, a customs declaration is the act whereby a person indicates the wish to place goods under a given customs procedure. This legal procedure is described in the Union Customs Code (UCC) (Articles 5 (12) and 158 to 187)¹⁶.

Exports (HMRC trade data): the country of destination as declared at the time of export. However, where goods can be traded while in transit (e.g. grain and crude oil), this may not necessarily be the final destination of the goods.

Food and crops: commodities traded for the primary purpose of human consumption.

Forestry: timber and wood commodities but not live trees.

Fruit: the sweet and fleshy product of a tree or other plant that contains seed and can be eaten as food.

Hardwood: timber from broadleaved trees.

Imports (HMRC trade data): The country from which the goods were originally dispatched to the UK without any commercial transaction in any intermediate country (either with or without breaking bulk in the course of transport). This is not necessarily the country of origin, manufacture or the last country from which the goods were shipped to the UK.

Inspection: Official visual examination of plants, plant products or other regulated articles to determine if pests are present or to determine compliance with phytosanitary regulations [FAO, 1990; revised FAO, 1995; formerly “inspect”].

¹⁵ Some definitions are taken from [ISPM 5 Glossary of phytosanitary terms](#)

¹⁶ [Union Customs Code](#)

Non-EU European countries: Countries outside of the European Union but geographically part of Europe¹⁷.

'Other' commodities: plants and parts of plants (including seeds and fruits) used primarily in perfumery or pharmacy or for insecticidal, fungicidal or similar purposes.

Phytosanitary certificate: An official paper document or its official electronic equivalent, consistent with the model certificates of the IPPC, attesting that a consignment meets phytosanitary import requirements [FAO, 1990; revised CPM, 2012]

Plants and plant commodities: goods including plants, trees, bulbs, seeds, fruit, vegetables and timber. Commodities are included if they are (1) raw plant products or (2) simply processed, i.e., processed in a manner that would not, in theory, remove the pest and disease risk.

Plants and planting material: live or dormant plants, seeds, bulbs or tubers of plants and trees and cut flowers.

Simple processing: Simple processing can include peeling, grinding, chopping and debarking but excludes cooking, fermenting and preservation in liquid. For further information please see International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures; ISPM No. 32; Categorisation of commodities according to their pest risk (2009)¹⁸.

Softwood: timber from coniferous trees.

Vegetable: A plant or part of a plant used as food, such as a cabbage, potato, turnip, or bean.

¹⁷ [List of non-EU countries](#)

¹⁸ [International standards for phytosanitary measures. ISPM No. 32](#)