



Animal &  
Plant Health  
Agency

Animal and Plant Health Agency  
Access to Information Team  
Woodham Lane  
New Haw  
Addlestone  
Surrey  
KT15 3NB

[enquiries@apha.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gov.uk)

[www.gov.uk/apha](http://www.gov.uk/apha)

Our Ref: ATIC2085

[REDACTED]  
{By Email}

03 August 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

## PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your request for information on bumblebee imports which we received on 04 July 2020. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below:

“If there are any reports of disease in imported bumblebees and if there is any screening done by (or on behalf of) natural England.

How frequent are reported violations of importation laws and their use”

Imports of bumblebees must be inspected prior to dispatch and accompanied by health certification which provides guarantees about the health of the bees. It would be for the applicant to ensure that the bees are disease free through disease screening.

“I would also like to request information on the numbers of native and non native hives being imported annually, how many different farms are importing these hives, what kind of facilities they have, and in what locations please. I would like this information from when you started collecting these records (I think around 5 years ago?) To the present day and where possible with specific dates of purchase/destruction, and queen escapes.”

The information you have requested can be found in Appendix 1.

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) has access to UK statistical data from the EU Commission’s Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) system, for commercial imports to the UK. The information extracted from here is a true reflection of the information that we have access to. The information does not differentiate between native and non-native species. APHA cannot guarantee the accuracy of this data, as we can only rely on the information that has been input into TRACES by a third party.

The attached table (Appendix 2) shows the number of farms for which new class licences were issued for emergency release of non-native subspecies of bumblebee (*Bombus terrestris*) in commercial glass-houses for crop pollination from 2016 – 2020.

Natural England (NE) only issue licences for the release of non-native bumblebees into poly-tunnels or glass-houses for crop pollination in emergency situations, when stocks of the native bumblebee are no longer available or very low.

No escapes or disease outbreaks have been reported and we do not hold information on specific dates of purchase/destruction. We have had no reports of violations of importation laws and their use.

## **Section 40**

Some of the information contained within the requested documents have been withheld under section 40(2), read in conjunction with 40(3A)(a), (third party personal data), of the FOIA as the information constitutes personal data relating to a third party. Section 40(2), read in conjunction with 40(3A)(a), of the FOIA provides that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure of that information would breach any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

APHA consider that disclosure of this information (names addresses and contact details) is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Article 5(1)(a) repeated in 35(1) DPA, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner in two ways. First, disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data, second, disclosure of that information would not be 'lawful'. Therefore, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under section 40 of the FOIA.

Information disclosed in response to this FOI request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOI and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

An Annex is attached which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you and contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact the Access to Information Team at the email address below. During the current Coronavirus outbreak, our offices will be closed.

Yours sincerely

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION TEAM**

Email: [enquiries@apha.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gov.uk)

## Annex

### Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can also be used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents produced by APHA will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the [Open Government Licence](#). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see [The National Archives website](#).

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).

### Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request, you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to the Access to Information Manager at the address at the top of this letter or email [enquiries@apha.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@apha.gov.uk) and the team will arrange for an internal review of your case.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted APHA's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

### Coronavirus

However, following the changes to Government advice, from Tuesday 24 March 2020 the ICO offices will be closed. They will therefore not be able to collect correspondence sent via post. Where possible, they ask that you [contact them online](#) or call on 0303 123 1113