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**To:** IPPC contact points

## **Extension of COVID-19 easement on original paper phytosanitary certificates**

I am writing to make you aware of an extension to the current COVID-19 easements until 31 December 2021. This easement includes the temporary change to the requirements for original paper phytosanitary certificates to accompany consignments of regulated plants and plant products imported from third countries to GB.

We understand that competent authorities in many countries are having difficulties, as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on staff resources, in providing their exporters with original paper copies of phytosanitary certificates. In recognition of this and in order to ensure trade can continue, the following changes to the requirement for original paper phytosanitary certificates will continue:

- Subject to bilateral agreement between our National Plant Protection Organisations where not already agreed, we will accept digital [PDF] copies in lieu of original phytosanitary certificates for consignments of regulated plants and plant products until 31 December 2021, subject to regular review.
- Copies of phytosanitary certificates should still conform to the requirements of ISPM 12, including being signed, stamped and dated.
- The quality of these copies should allow for a comprehensive documentary check to be carried out, so in particular the content of the certificate should be clearly legible, all attached sheets must be included and the corresponding serial numbers clearly visible.
- In the event that there is any suspicion of fraud or falsification, then regulators will reserve the right to follow this up, and in these cases may require the original certificate to be provided or for consignments to be re-exported or destroyed.
- The original paper phytosanitary certificates for consignments exported with only an electronic copy must be provided as soon as technically feasible once the requirements referred to above have been substantially reviewed or lifted.

The legislative amendment to enable this further extension of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/466 can be found [here](#)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2021/681/contents/made>

## Official Guidance for writing Additional Declarations (ADs)

GB has recently released official guidance which illustrates how the special requirements in [The Plant Health \(Phytosanitary Conditions\) \(Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#)<sup>2</sup> should be interpreted, and thus how the ADs must be written on the phytosanitary certificate. We would like to remind all third countries that it is important the ADs are written correctly to avoid non-compliance and ensure they pass the necessary checks in GB. This guidance can be found on the [Plant Health Portal](#)<sup>3</sup>.

Please direct any questions regarding the extension of the Covid-19 easement or new official guidance on additional declarations to [uknppo@defra.gov.uk](mailto:uknppo@defra.gov.uk).

Yours faithfully



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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/1527/contents/made>

<sup>3</sup> <https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/eu-exit-guidance/imports/requirements-for-additional-declarations-ads-on-phytosanitary-certificates-pcs/>