WARE POTATO MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2024 CROP

**1.** **GENERAL** **PLANT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The marketing of ware potatoes is governed by “The Marketing of Potatoes Regulations (NI) 1989 (as amended)” and “the Marketing of Potatoes Act (NI) 1964 (as amended)”. Plant health matters are determined by “The Plant Health (Official Controls and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 (S.R. 2020 No. 293) (as amended)”. Fees are set in “the Marketing of Potatoes (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011”.

1.1 Exports to EC Countries

For potatoes moving within the EC (including within NI) “trace-back” controls are in operation. Growers must put their Plant Health Registration number on each package or in the case of loose loaded potatoes transported in bulk, on the documents accompanying the load. Name and address can also be included.

Where a trader replaces the grower’s registration number on any consignment with his own registration number, he should keep records, which enable the origin of the consignment to be verified. Where consignments are mixed before further trading the packer must use his own registration number on the packaging and documents and keep similar records so that the origin of the consignment can be traced.

1.2 Exports to non-EC Countries

Ware potatoes for shipment to non-EC countries (excluding GB) must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by Plant Health Inspection Branch. This also applies to shipments to the Canary Islands.

1.3 Exporting merchants are advised to give growers a reasonable amount of time to grade and pack consignments in order to allow at least two days for “curing” prior to farm inspection, sealing and loading for despatch. This is particularly important for shipment in containers.

1.4 All ware potatoes supplied must conform to at least the prescribed minimum standards of size and quality and be packaged and labelled as specified in “the Marketing of Potatoes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1989, (S.R. 1989 No. 221)”.

1.5 Merchants are reminded that where necessary, ware potatoes must conform to any higher or additional standards of quality, health and packaging set by the importing country. They should also ensure compliance with any other conditions and regulations of the importing country.

1.6 Ware Potatoes for Shipment

Consignments of ware potatoes to all Non EC destinations must be inspected and sealed on the farm of origin to enable a phytosanitary certificate to be issued. A fee of £4.30 per tonne or part of a tonne is payable for inspection.

**Further Requirements for the export of ware to the Canary Islands and other Non EC countries**

**2. STANDARDS OF PACKAGING**

2.1 Packages of potatoes and any packing materials used in them must be:-

(a) new, clean and non-toxic; and

(b) sufficient to avoid any external or internal damage to the potatoes contained in the package.

2.2 The contents of each package or lot must:-

(a) be of a uniform size;

(b) contain potatoes from the same country of origin; and

(c) contain potatoes of which at least 98% by weight are of the same variety.

2.3 Where a lot of potatoes consists of more than one package, each package in that lot must, as far as practicable, be of the same weight. Merchants intending to ship ware potatoes in 500 kg or 1000 kg bags must inform the local inspector of their intention prior to the commencement of packing to facilitate inspection. For the 2023 crop the plastic seals will continue to be used on these bags.

**3. SIZE**

3.1 Maincrop Potatoes

Potatoes shall not pass through a square mesh of 35 mm by 35 mm other than in the case of a variety of potatoes whose average length is at least twice its average width.

3.2 Limits of Tolerance

(a) Not more than 3% by weight shall fail to comply with these standards;

(b) NO POTATOES SHALL PASS THROUGH A SQUARE MESH OF 28 MM BY 28 MM.

These tolerances apply to the contents of each package – i.e. if the label indicates the size as 40 mm by 60 mm not more than 3% by weight should fail to meet the size stated and none should be smaller than 28 mm by 28 mm.

**4. LABELLING**

4.1 The particulars listed in paragraph 4.2 must be:-

(a) on a label which is secured to the fastening of the package; or

(b) on a label placed inside the package, which must be legible from outside the package; or

(c) legibly and indelibly marked directly on one side of the package.

4.2 The name and address of the packer or, if appropriate, the dispatcher and, if shipped by a merchant, his name and trade brand.

The grower’s or merchant’s Plant Health Registration number (see paragraph 1.1 above).

Northern Ireland Table Potatoes

Variety

Net Weight

Date of Packing

Chemical treatment if appropriate

**IT IS ESSENTIAL TO RECORD THE ABOVE INFORMATION**

4.3 Merchants are recommended to use labels similar in size to the official EC seed potato passport – 110 mm x 76 mm approx. – with a layout as illustrated below.

**FRONT**

|  |
| --- |
| **MERCHANT** and/or **TRADE BRAND**  ADDRESS |
| PACKED BY: (NAME AND ADDRESS)  GROWER’S OR MERCHANT’S PLANT HEALTH REGISTRATION NUMBER: UK/NI ………………….. |

**BACK**

|  |
| --- |
| **NORTHERN IRELAND TABLE POTATOES** |
| Variety  Net Weight  Date of Packing  CHEMICAL TREATMENT IF APPROPRIATE |

Merchants should make their own arrangements to have labels printed. Labels, which have been stitched to bags, must be tear resistant. They must not be re-used.

**5. EU Exit**

**The implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol means that regulated goods moving from Great Britain to Northern Ireland are subject to rules on EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures and marketing of certain propagating material and seeds which currently apply to third countries. As a consequence the movement of ware potatoes from GB to NI requires a Phytosanitary certificate and a pre-notification CHEDPP on Traces NT. Further information on pre-notification requirements can be found on DAERA’s ‘Ware Potatoes’ webpage at** [**https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/ware-potatoes**](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/ware-potatoes)**.**

**The movement of ware potatoes from NI to GB and NI to the EU currently remains unaffected and the same conditions apply as before.**

**6. IMPORTING COUNTRIES’ REQUIREMENTS**

5.1 Merchants should ensure compliance with any conditions and regulations imposed by the importing country. **Merchants or their agents should make contact with officials from the importing country to ensure that all additional requirements to be met are understood. Merchants should communicate these requirements to the grower responsible for grading consignments.**

* 1. For the Canary Islands and countries outside the European Union, the fields in which the ware potatoes were grown must have been sampled and been found free from Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN).
  2. Ware potatoes for export to Russia (either directly or via another Member State) must have a PCN consignment test carried out in store after harvest. This consignment test will be carried out in addition to any pre planting PCN field test.

**7. CHEMICAL TREATMENT**

If the potatoes have been chemically treated, the name of the chemical used must be stated on the phytosanitary certificate. Chemical treatment should also be included on a label attached to each package.

**8. INSPECTION**

8.1 All potatoes for shipment to non-EC destinations and the Canary Islands must be:-

(a) Inspected and sealed on the farm;

(b) re-presented for check inspection if they have been in storage more than 14 days after sealing.

8.2 The necessary documents (MP3 and shipping document) must accompany each load. The shipping document must show the quantity (number of bags), the country of destination and the names of the stevedore firm and shipping agent handling the cargo or containers. Lots presented without proper documents will not be accepted. Lots may be finalised on the farm.

**9. TRANSPORTATION**

(i) When cargoes are laid down in sheds, there should be heavy tarpaulin-type covers and/or heating equipment sufficient to prevent frost damage.

1. Non-insulated containers are satisfactory provided the floor, sides and tops of the bags are adequately protected from frost and condensation by the use of insulative materials, e.g. corrugated cardboard. These containers should not be left outdoors during frosty weather after loading.

**10. PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES**

**10.1 Ordering Phytosanitary Certificates**

Phytosanitary certificates are ordered via an online system called PECOL which can be accessed on the following link:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/phytosanitary-export-certificate-online-pecol>

Please enter all necessary information on the online form including, your Business I.D, consignor, variety, quantity, consignee and eventual destination. Incomplete forms may delay the issue of the certificate. DAERA will aim to provide the phytosanitary certificate within 10 working days of the online application being submitted. More details can be found on the above link

**Please submit an application at the earliest opportunity if considering an export.**

**10.2 The Department will not**:

1. Issue phytosanitary certificates at variance with those already agreed and normally accepted by customer countries, unless the shipping merchant has reached **PRIOR** agreement with Plant Health Inspection Branch **BEFORE** finalising the transaction with the customer;
2. Issue a phytosanitary certificate until it has received confirmation of shipment by the provision of a copy of the Bill of Lading or other communication.

**11. VARIATIONS FROM THESE ARRANGEMENTS**

Variations from the above arrangements will not normally be permitted, however, requests for minor variations **PRIOR TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION** will be considered.

It is the responsibility of the merchant to inform his haulier or agent of the shipping arrangements.

**12**. **THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE FOR GENERAL GUIDANCE ONLY. DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL SHIPMENTS TO NON-EC COUNTRIES SHOULD BE CLEARED IN ADVANCE WITH PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION BRANCH, CLARE HOUSE, 303 AIRPORT ROAD WEST, BELFAST, BT3 9ED (TELEPHONE: 028 90 524168, EMAIL:** [phcrops@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:phcrops@daera-ni.gov.uk) **).**

**Issued by Plant Health Inspection Branch**

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**1st October 2024**