

Xylella Fastidiosa FAQ Sheet

What is Xylella Fastidiosa?

X. fastidiosa is a bacterial pathogen, which has been found in parts of France, Italy, Spain and in a glasshouse in Germany and if it enters the UK it could have a wide and damaging impact on nursery stock production, urban landscapes and the countryside. It causes multiple symptoms including wilts, diebacks, stunts, leaf scorches and plant death.

What are the EU Emergency Measures?

Where the disease is found on a plant and it has spread, or there is risk that spread may have occurred, then a 5km demarcated area is required but the eventual size and length of time it remains in place will depend on a risk assessment.

These specified actions include removing all hosts irrespective of their health status immediately from within 100 m of the infected plants, an intensive survey to show that no infected plants or vectors are present in the infested area and no evidence of spread is detected within the 5 Km buffer zone.

How long do the restrictions stay in place for?

If evidence of spread is detected then statutory movement restrictions will remain within a buffer of radius 5km for a five year minimum after official surveys have confirmed that X. fastidiosa is not present.

What happens if Xylella is found in a private garden?

The EU Emergency Measures will be triggered as they would be within a business.

Will these private gardens, and the gardens surrounding them be carefully monitored to identify any further spread?

In the event of an outbreak, private gardens will be surveyed to confirm whether or not infected plants are present.

If a private home-owner brings back or buys an infected plant which then causes an outbreak, will they cause the emergency measures to be enacted – stock destruction and movement bans – which could disrupt garden centre or nursery operations?

Yes – the outbreak measures will need to be applied if the original infection is at a commercial or non-commercial site.

What can the public do to help reduce the threat?

Do not bring any plants or cuttings back from holidays and be mindful of where you are sourcing plants from. Visit www.hta.org.uk/xylella to check if your local garden centre is signed up to the HTA Responsible Sourcing Statement.