



# SEED POTATO MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2019 CROP

## 1. PLANT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Marketing of Northern Ireland seed potatoes is governed by The Seed Potatoes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016. Plant Health matters are specified in the Plant Health Order (NI) 2018 (as amended). Fees are determined by the Seed Potatoes (Tuber Inspection Fees) Regulations (NI) 2011. All seed growers, applicants and sellers are strongly advised to make themselves aware of the detailed requirements of these Regulations.

(a) All seed potatoes marketed must be from a crop which has been certified and classified by the Department. The standards for grading and packing of all consignments are set out in [The Seed Potatoes Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#). Additional Phytosanitary or quality requirements may be required by certain importing countries.

(b) Export to EC countries (including to GB) and any movement within NI. Before marketing basic seed potatoes a plant passport (label) supplied by the Department must be affixed to each package or container and sealed by the Department's Plant Health Inspection Branch (PHIB).

(c) Exports to non-EC countries and the Canary Islands. Seed potatoes for shipment to non-EC countries and the Canary Islands must be accompanied by a Phytosanitary (plant health) certificate issued by PHIB.

(d) 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.

(e) Guidance on packaging, labelling and inspection procedures is given in the following paragraphs.

(f) The fee for the inspection and sealing of seed potatoes from the 2019 crop is unchanged at £4.80 per tonne sealed. This includes the supply of plant passports (labels). Full or partial details will be printed by the Department on request, at no extra cost.





### 3. BAGS AND CONTAINERS

Bags should be new, clean, and of a type approved by DAERA.

Merchants intending to market seed potatoes in 500 kg, 1,000 kg or heavier bags or boxes must inform the local inspector of their intention prior to the commencement of packing to facilitate inspection. All bags must be new.

Growers should note that big bags must be sealed by threading the yellow plastic seal through a pre punched hole in the label and sealing it around the mouth of the bag.

Boxes or containers should be new or if previously used for any purpose, must be cleaned and disinfected to the satisfaction of the inspector.

### 4. BRANDS

All packages or containers used for seed shipment should contain the following particulars, which will be known and referred to as the Standard Brand:-

Northern Ireland Pre-Basic Seed Potatoes or Basic Seed Potatoes

The name, or initials or trade brand or other symbols (e.g. plant health registration number) identifying the person at whose request the pre-basic seed potatoes or basic seed potatoes are sealed.

Net Weight (kgs)

The letters and figures in the Brand should be at least 50mm in height. It is suggested that "Northern Ireland" should be emphasised by branding in letters greater than 50mm.

Information shown in the Brand must correspond with that on the passport.

Where it is intended to market seed potatoes in packages or containers that do not have the Standard Brand the Department should be contacted to ensure that the proposed branding is acceptable.



## 5. EU Exit No Deal

The EU have stated that in the event of a No Deal, the UK will be treated as a Third Country and UK seed Potatoes will not be eligible to be marketed in the EU. The UK has submitted an application for third country equivalence for seed potatoes but the EU has stated that they will not consider this application until the withdrawal negotiations have been completed.

Currently under the scenario of EU Exit “No Deal” the only way to ensure seed potatoes are accepted into the EU is to deliver in advance of EU Exit.

Growers and businesses are advised to keep up-to-date with EU Exit developments by visiting the DAERA’s Brexit webpage at [www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/brexit](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/landing-pages/brexit) .

The information contained in this document relating to exports to EU Countries is only relevant in a pre-EU Exit situation.

## 6. VOLUNTARY EXPORT STANDARD

In agreement with exporters and growers the Department is inspecting lots for export to the Canary Islands and non EU countries to a tighter standard than the standard required in the EU. Growers were previously informed of this initiative and the hope is that this move will reduce rejections and increase trade to these destinations. The standard is as follows:

Disease, pest, damage, blemish or impurity	Percentage tolerance	Group tolerance	Overall tolerance	Allowable surface area	
Rots including Blight	0.2%	} 0.2%	} 4.7%		
Gangrene/Dry/Wet Rot	0.2%				
Blackleg/Soft Rots	0.2%				
Black Scurf	1.5%	} 1.5%			12.5%
Common Scab	1.5%				12.5%
Powdery Scab	1.5%				12.5%
Skin Spot	0.5%				12.5%
Damage/ Misshapen	1.0%				
Earth and other extraneous matter	0.5%				

This is a strict standard especially for skin disease, for example it allows only 1.5% of tubers to have more than 12.5% common scab whereas the EU standard is 5% at 33% common scab.



## 7. IMPORTING COUNTRY REQUIREMENTS

Importing countries may specify additional conditions and regulations and apply stricter tolerances than the voluntary export standard. **Sellers or their agents should make contact with officials from the importing country to ensure that all additional requirements are met and understood before grading commences.** The following are the main requirements for **some** of the countries which import Northern Ireland seed potatoes.

COUNTRY	MAIN REQUIREMENTS
Canary Islands	<b>Black Scurf – 5% with greater than 10% surface area</b> <b>Sprang (PMTV and TRV) – 1.5%</b> <b>Silver Scurf – 50% of tubers with greater than 50% surface area</b> <b>Practically no soil, no adhering lumps</b> <b>Wood packaging should comply with ISPM 15</b>
Morocco	<b>Powdery Scab – Nil tolerance</b> <b>Silver Scurf – 5% of tubers with greater than one third surface area</b>
Egypt	<b>Frost and misshapes – 0%</b> <b>Pink Rot, Blight and Spraing - 0.1%</b> <b>Internal brown, black spot or vascular discolouration – 0.5%</b> <b>Hollow Heart – 0.5%</b> <b>Powdery Scab – 1% of tubers with greater than 10% surface area</b> <b>Common Scab – 1/3 tubers free from scab, remainder not more than 1/16 surface area</b> <b>Black Dot (Colletorichum coccodes) – no tubers with more than 20% surface area</b> <b>Silver scurf – 20% tubers by weight with greater than 20% surface area</b> <b><i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> (all symptoms including black scurf, elephant hide, cracking, etc.) - up to 5% of tubers by weight with greater than 10% surface area</b> <b>Tubers should be maximum size 55mm</b> <b>Wood packaging should comply with ISPM 15</b>
Saudi Arabia	<b>Bacteria Rots and Spraing – Nil</b> <b>Adhering and loose soil - 1%</b> <b>Tubers should be maximum size 55mm</b> <b>No inner label required this season</b>





For 2019 the Canary Islands have relaxed their Silver Scurf and Black Scurf requirements, see previous table. However this remains a challenging market and we advise growers not to relax their selection and grading for this market. DAERA inspectors will assist growers in the selection of stocks for this very strict market and growers should contact inspectors well in advance of export for guidance in this respect. A sample from the prospective stock will be washed prior to grading to assess the level of skin blemishes accurately.

## 8. OFFICIAL PASSPORT

- (a) An official passport (label) with the grower's Plant Health Registration number printed in permanent black ink must be attached to all packages or containers.
- (b) For potatoes grown under contract, the passport **must** show both the applicant's and contract grower's plant health registration number e.g. UK/NI 8888-9999 where "8888" represents the Applicant and "9999" the Grower.
- (c) The passport will show the Union Grade, Field Generation and stock Crop number
- (d) Passports must not be re-used.

Passports bearing manuscript changes will **not** be sealed. Any unauthorised amendments or changes made after sealing will render the passport invalid.

### (e) Ordering Plant Passports

At least 2 working days notice should be given by the applicant to the Department's Plant Health Inspection Branch. Applications should be emailed where possible using the application form available for download from

[www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/form-seed-potato-plant-passport-label-orders](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/form-seed-potato-plant-passport-label-orders)

Please disregard the old form and use the current version. Please note that the email address for passports is [phcrops@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:phcrops@daera-ni.gov.uk)

## 9. CHEMICAL TREATMENT

Where stocks have been treated with a chemical this must be stated on a suitable label attached to the bag. DAERA are prepared to print details of the chemical treatment used on tubers on the Plant Passport. Growers/applicants wishing to have the chemical





treatment recorded on the Plant Passport should state the chemical treatment on the label application. Chemical treatment must be stated in terms of **active ingredient** not the chemical trade name. The chemical treatment can still be printed on a separate label and attached to the bag as before.

DAERA does not guarantee that any chemical treatment stated on the Plant Passport has been applied or that it has been applied in the correct manner. It is the grower/applicant of the stock who has responsibility to ensure that the “Stated Chemical Treatment” has been applied correctly.

## 9. INSPECTION

- (a) Seed Potatoes for marketing in EC Countries will only be inspected and sealed on the farm or store, as appropriate, prior to transport to final destination. It is essential that the Inspector is presented with the correct quantity and details of destination. **Inspections will only be carried out if suitable inspection facilities are available on the premises, namely, an inspection shute, adequate lighting and access to the consignment to permit the inspector to collect the required sample in safety.**
- (b) All seed potatoes for shipment to non-EC destinations and the Canary Islands must be:-
  - (i) inspected and sealed on the farm;
  - (ii) re-presented for check inspection if they remain in the store for more than 14 days after inspection and sealing;
  - (iii) Non containerised exports through Warrenpoint will no longer be subject to a routine dock inspection. Facilities are however available at the port for spot checks on loads where required.

## 10. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS

- (a) The seller of seed potatoes should provide the purchaser with a document giving the details of the lot within 14 days of delivery;
- (b) This document should include the variety, net weight, Union Grade, size and grower's UK/NI number;





- (c) For seed potatoes marketed within Northern Ireland the seller is encouraged to supply a copy of the SD1 (Sealing Document) for the lot to the buyer. Providing a copy of the SD1 will ensure that the all documentary requirements are met;
- (d) Seed growers should note that where a stock is moved to another grower's/seller's store for grading an SD1 should accompany this load.

## 11. TRANSPORTATION

### (a) In Northern Ireland

All potatoes transported on trailers, flat beds and lorries should be covered in such a way that they are completely protected from rain and frost.

### (b) To Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland

Loads on trailers, flat beds and lorries should be double sheeted from end to end and insulated sufficiently to protect the load from frost.

“Tautliners” are satisfactory provided the floor, sides and tops of the bags are adequately protected from frost and condensation by the use of insulation and moisture absorbent materials e.g. corrugated cardboard.

### (c) To Foreign Destinations

- (i) When cargoes are laid down in sheds there should be heavy tarpaulin-type covers and/or heating equipment sufficient to prevent frost damage.
- (ii) 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 insulating materials e.g. corrugated cardboard. Such containers should not be left outdoors during frosty weather after loading.
- (iii) The seller should ensure that the shipping agent sets the temperature in reefer containers to a suitable level for the duration of the voyage and the variety exported. Growers are encouraged to carry out a “Hot-Box” test prior to export to identify lots suitable for export.







## 12. PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATES (FOR DESTINATIONS OUTSIDE THE EC AND FOR THE CANARY ISLANDS)

### a) Ordering Phytosanitary Certificates

At least 2 working days notice in writing should be given by the supplying merchant to the Department's Plant Health Inspection Branch. Applications should be emailed where possible using the application form available for download from the DAERA website at [www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/phytosanitary-certificate-order-form](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/phytosanitary-certificate-order-form)

The email address for certificates is [cropsphytorequest@daera-ni.gov.uk](mailto:cropsphytorequest@daera-ni.gov.uk). Details given should include consignor, variety, quantity, Union Grade, grower's Plant Health Registration number, Northern Ireland port of shipment, consignee and eventual destination. Incomplete applications may be returned to the applicant. **UNLESS SUFFICIENT PRIOR NOTICE IS GIVEN A PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATE MAY NOT BE ISSUED.**

b) **The Department can not receive faxed phyto applications.**

c) **The Department will not:-**

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.

## 13. 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.

## 14. REBATES OF TUBER INSPECTION FEES

Following an audit of the Northern Ireland seed potato certification scheme and a review of scheme procedures the Department has ceased the rebating of tuber inspection fees for lots marketed outside the UK.







**15. 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, ROOM 1022, DUNDONALD HOUSE, UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD, BALLYMISCAW, BELFAST BT4 3SB (TELEPHONE 028 90 524148 or 028 90 524168).**

## **16. PLANT BREEDER'S RIGHTS**

Merchants should note that it is their responsibility to ensure that they have received the necessary consent for marketing seed potatoes of any variety which is subject to Plant Breeder's Rights.

## **17. FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information on Northern Ireland Seed Potatoes, including details of how to apply for Phytosanitary Certificates and Plant Passports by e-mail and the Register of Pre-Basic and Basic Seed Potato Crops 2019 can be viewed on the DAERA Internet site at [www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/seed-potatoes](http://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/seed-potatoes)

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