



SEED POTATO MARKETING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2016 CROP

1. CHANGES TO THE SEED POTATO REGULATIONS

A reminder that, as per the new Seed Potato regulations that were introduced at the start of 2016, all seed stocks will be marketed using the new Union Grades and Field Generations. Each stock will also be marketed using a Crop Number which is specific for each stock.

Also date stamping of labels is no longer required and that the seed potato labels will be printed with the date of sealing included. This brings us into line with other seed potato schemes.

2. 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) 2006 (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). A number of local merchants are authorised to print specific basic seed potato crop details, for which they are the applicant, on Department official plant passports. Businesses permitted this facility will be subject to an annual audit of labels printed and in the event of any discrepancies being detected the permission to print crop specific information will be withdrawn.





(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 2016 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)

EC grade and size are optional subject to customer requirements.

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. 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 informed of this initiative last October 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.



6. 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	Black Scurf – 1% with greater than 5% surface area Spraing (PMTV and TRV) – 1.5% Silver Scurf – 5% of tubers with greater than 30% surface area Practically no soil, no adhering lumps
Morocco	Powdery Scab – Nil tolerance Silver Scurf – 5% of tubers with greater than one third surface area
Egypt	Frost and misshapes – 0% Pink Rot, Blight and Spraing - 0.1% Internal brown, black spot or vascular discolouration – 0.5% Hollow Heart – 0.5% Powdery Scab – 1% of tubers with greater than 10% surface area Common Scab – 1/3 tubers free from scab, remainder not more than 1/16 surface area Black Scurf – 5% of tubers with greater than 10% surface area Tubers should be maximum size 55mm
Saudi Arabia	Bacteria Rots and Spraing – Nil Adhering and loose soil - 1% Tubers should be maximum size 55mm No inner label required this season





7. 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) With the introduction of the new Union Grades on 1st January 2016 the EC grade is no longer required on labels.
- (c) 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.
- (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 new application form available for download from www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/seed-potatoes. Please disregard the old form and use the new version . Please note that the email address for passports has changed to phcrops@daera-ni.gov.uk .

Faxed label applications can no longer be received by the Department.

8. CHEMICAL TREATMENT

Where stocks have been treated with a chemical this must be stated on a suitable label attached to the bag. For the 2016 crop 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 growers 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 growers/sellers store for grading an SD1 should accompany this load.





FOREST SERVICE

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/articles/seed-potatoes. Please note that the email address for certificates has changed to cropsphytorequest@daera-ni.gov.uk Details given should include consignor, variety, quantity, Union Grade, grower’s plant health



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**



FOREST SERVICE

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 no longer 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

Businesses that export seed or ware potatoes out of the UK from Northern Ireland may be entitled to a rebate of tuber inspection fees paid to DARD.

DAERA no longer print Rebate Claim forms (MP138) in booklet form but have produced a version on the DARD website for growers and merchants to use.

More information on rebates including a claim form can be found on the DAERA website at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/seed-potatoes.

- 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 1019, DUNDONALD HOUSE, UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD, BELFAST BT4 3SB (TELEPHONE 028 9052 4874).**





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 2016 can be viewed on the DAERA Internet site at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/seed-potatoes

**Issued by Plant Health Inspection Branch
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Room 1022
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3SB**



An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**