



Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020

Key information for those businesses and organisations reporting use of Plant Protection Products (PPPs)

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WHO, WHAT AND WHY

1. What are the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 (the 2020 Regulations)?

The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 implement in part the retained [EU Official Controls Regulation](#) (the OCR) for PPPs in Great Britain. The OCR applies official controls throughout the agri-food supply chain with the aim of improving and providing assurance in feed and food safety, animal health and welfare and plant health.

2. Why are we implementing an EU Regulation now that we have left the EU?

The EU Regulation was directly applicable in the UK before we left the EU and we were therefore required to implement it. We have done this through the 2020 Regulations, which came into force in June 2020. The application of the 2020 Regulations is not related to the UK's departure from the EU.

The 2020 Regulations are domestic regulations. They implement in part the OCR, which is retained EU Law.

3. What are the benefits of the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020?

Plant protection products play a vital role in supporting plant health and crop production. When used safely, they protect crops and natural landscapes from native and invasive non-native species. This supports domestic food production and the maintenance of recreational, transport and amenity areas. Official controls enable us to ensure that



pesticides legislation is complied with, i.e. that they are used sustainably and in accordance with conditions of use.

The 2020 regulations will bring several benefits to Great Britain. It will enable Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government to understand how PPPs are being sold and used, and support businesses and organisations to comply with existing pesticides legislation.

Our aim is to help to increase compliance with pesticides legislation by taking a risk-based approach to the monitoring and inspection of activities relating to plant protection products (PPPs). As part of our approach, we will be revising guidance such as the Code of Practice for using plant protection products and are looking into ways of increasing its accessibility for users.

4. What does a risk-based approach mean?

The Official Controls Regulations, along with other legislation governing the sale and use of pesticides, enable regulators to monitor compliance with the relevant legislation with the aim of ensuring that anyone working with PPPs does so safely and in accordance with relevant legal requirements.

To be able to do this, it is necessary to hold information on who is working with PPPs throughout the supply chain and their activities, and the risks associated with those activities. Collecting this information under the 2020 Regulations will enable regulatory authorities to develop a programme of visits to build on our understanding of compliance with existing PPP legislation across the supply chain. This will identify where the greatest risks of non-compliance are and enable resources to be focussed on reducing those risks where most needed.

5. What requirements do the Regulations introduce?

The Official Controls Regulations require Defra and the Welsh and Scottish Governments to establish and maintain an evidence base of businesses across the GB (Great Britain) PPP supply chain. The 2020 Regulations require businesses and organisations that carry out activities relating to the manufacture, sale and use of PPPs and their components to provide details of their activities to Defra and equivalent government departments in Scotland and Wales.

6. What is the point of collecting this information?

Collection of this information will enable regulators to support businesses with compliance in a proactive and systematic way, and to target their advice and support to higher risk businesses.



7. Who is affected by the 2020 Regulations?

- If you are a professional user of PPPs and any adjuvants in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), you must register under the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 (the 2020 Regulations).
- Retailers of amateur PPPs are also subject to the 2020 Regulations. Information on how they can register will be released soon to enable these businesses to provide their information by the 22 June 2022 deadline.
- Importers, manufacturers, processors, distributors, or sellers of either PPPs, adjuvants or PPP ingredients for professional use in Great Britain (England, Scotland or Wales) had an obligation to provide their information by September 2021, but any business that has not yet done so can register using a different form.

8. What do I have to do?

- For professional users of PPPs, the deadline to meet this legal obligation is 22 June 2022. Defra has therefore [put a mechanism in place](#) to enable users in GB to provide this information and for it to be stored.
- Information on how retailers of amateur products can register will be released soon to enable these businesses to also provide their information by the 22 June 2022 deadline.
- If you begin using PPPs and any adjuvants in a professional capacity for the first time after 22 June 2022, you must register within 3 months of the time you begin.
- Users and sellers in Northern Ireland, The Channel Islands and the Isle of Man do not need to register with these forms. If you are based in Northern Ireland, you will need to register with the Northern Irish Government.

9. Who must register?

You must register if you are a [business in Great Britain that sells](#) or [uses professional plant protection products \(PPPs\) and adjuvants](#).

You might work in agriculture, horticulture, amenity or forestry and:

- use professional PPPs and any adjuvants as part of your work
- have professional PPPs and any adjuvants applied by a third party as part of your work in agriculture or horticulture, amenity or forestry

As a user of PPPs you need to register with [this form](#).

We require businesses and other organisations to register as professional users of PPPs and not the individuals who specifically apply PPPs within a business or organisation.



Where a business employs multiple individuals who all apply PPPs, for example, it is only the business that must register.

Retailers of amateur products also need to register. Defra will share information on how these businesses should register soon.

Businesses with multiple locations should register their main business site where they store and/or use PPPs or keep records of use. They should provide details of different sites where they store PPPs. You do not need to provide addresses of all the sites where you apply PPPs.

10. Who does not need to register for OCR?

You do not need to register for OCR if you are not a professional user of PPPs, for example if you use them in your garden.

HOW

11. How do I register for OCR?

To register, [download and fill in a form](#).

The form is in a spreadsheet format. You need spreadsheet software such as Microsoft Excel, LibreOffice, or Mac OS Numbers on your device to open and fill in the form.

The form is available in 2 different file types: .ods and .xls.

Use the .ods file if you have Open Office or Libre Office.

Use the .xls file if you have Microsoft Excel or Mac OS Numbers. This is a free application provided by Apple and should be preinstalled on your Mac.

If you prefer to use Google Sheets, please download the form either in Excel or ODS format, upload to Google Drive, and open with Google Sheets.

Save the completed form as a .ods or .xls file.

Email the file to GB-OCR-Notification@defra.gov.uk by 22 June 2022.

12. Is it possible to obtain a paper form?

You can request a paper form by emailing ocr-ppp@defra.gov.uk. Please ensure you provide name and address details for where the form should be sent. A stamped addressed envelope will be provided for you to return the form.



13. What information will I need to provide about my use of PPPs?

You will be asked to provide information on "What quantity of professional PPPs and any adjuvants do you use, or have applied by a third party, in a typical year".

Your products may be measured in either kgs or litres. If you have a mix of litres and kgs, combine these into one total. (You can consider one litre equal to one kg.)

An estimated figure is OK. Do not add the unit of measure to your figure.

You only need to provide a single figure that is an estimate of total usage in a typical year. It doesn't need to be spot on.

A rough estimate of total annual use will be adequate, a high level of precision is not necessary.

Use of treated seeds is not to be included in quantity applied. This use will be captured in the registration of seed treatment companies who apply the product to the seed.

14. Why are you asking for information on the total volume of PPPs that I use?

Volume is a proxy for risk. We recognise that there is not necessarily a link between the volume of use of PPPs and risk of non-compliance, but we need a simple starting point by which to organise the data.

15. How will regulators use the information; will they visit the biggest users first?

The approach to the visit programme is still being developed. Our aim is to help to increase compliance with pesticides legislation. We want to direct help with compliance to where it is most needed.

16. I am a member of an assurance scheme, why do I also need to notify the government?

Under the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020 sellers and users of professional plant protection products are required to notify the 'competent authority' of their business activities. The competent authorities are the Secretary of State for England, the Scottish Ministers for Scotland and the Welsh Ministers for Wales. Membership to an assurance scheme does not constitute notifying the competent authority.

We do recognise that some assurance schemes gather information about the use of PPPs and that this information could be relevant to the development of risk criteria in the longer term. We are looking into whether it is possible to update the registration form to enable



you to provide the name of any relevant assurance scheme(s) that you are a member of.

17. What happens if I miss the deadline to register?

The deadline to register as a professional user of PPPs or a retailer of amateur products in Great Britain is 22 June 2022. This deadline is statutory. It is an offence not to comply without reasonable excuse. We recognise that it is a very busy time with lots of demands on peoples' and business time. If you miss this deadline you must send in your form as soon as possible.

18. Will I receive notification that I have registered?

You will receive an auto-response email when you submit your form. You will receive further email confirmation when your form is processed.

DATA

19. Who will be collecting my personal data?

Defra is collecting your organisation or company name, the most relevant address to your professional PPP activity, your telephone number, organisation email address and data on how you work with PPPs and any adjuvants.

20. Will my personal information be confidential?

Personal information is confidential, and we are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We have set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access to or disclosure of your data - for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption.

Defra may be required to release information, including personal data and commercial information, on request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, Defra will not permit any unwarranted breach of confidentiality, nor will we act in contravention of our obligations under Data Protection laws.

21. What will you do with the information/data I provide?

The information you provide will be passed onto the relevant regulators and to the Welsh and Scottish Government if you operate in these countries. This information will be used by regulators to conduct a risk-based programme of visits. If you want to know more about how we will be using this data, please read the [Defra GDPR privacy notice](#).



22. I am a Welsh / Scottish user of professional plant protection products why am I required to notify Defra?

Defra is collecting information on behalf of the Scottish and Welsh Governments. Defra will share information submitted by operators based in Scotland and Wales with their respective governments.

SCENARIOS

23. I am both a supplier and user of plant protection products – do I need to register twice?

Businesses that apply professional PPPs in a professional capacity for clients and charge those clients for the supply of the PPPs they use, are only required to register as users of PPPs. In these cases, the supply of PPPs is considered a part of the application service.

Businesses that use PPPs in a professional capacity and supply them separately to their application of PPPs, should register as both a business that uses PPPs and a business that places PPPs on the market.

24. I store and spray PPPs for some of my customers, but other customers who I spray for, store their own PPPs. What do I need to register?

You should register the address(es) of your own storeroom(s). You should not register the storeroom(s) of your customers.

When answering the question on the quantity of PPPs you apply in a typical year, you should include the total amount of PPPs and adjuvants that you apply for all of your clients. If you do not have the exact figure, please estimate this total amount.

Your clients are responsible for registering their own stores and the total quantity of PPPs and adjuvants that they apply or have applied in a typical year.

It is not a problem that PPPs and adjuvants will be double counted.

25. I hire someone to use professional PPPs on my land. Do I need to register under The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations?

If you have professional PPPs and any adjuvants applied by a third party as part of your work in agriculture or horticulture, amenities or forestry, you need to register.



26. I am a landscaper/ I apply PPPs at multiple locations a year, many of which are private homes. Should I register all of these addresses?

Please provide only your own business addresses. Do not provide addresses of your clients where you apply PPPs for them.

27. We are a business with multiple locations. Do I need to add extra addresses to cover all locations?

You should register the main business address where you use PPPs and any adjuvants, store them and/or keep records. You should add extra addresses to register the different sites where you store PPPs and any adjuvants. You do not need to provide addresses of all the sites where you apply PPPs or keep records. On the form, there are instructions at the bottom of each extra address sheet explaining how to create additional sheets for further addresses.

28. Will I have to update my information every year / register again in the future?

There is a requirement on the competent authorities, so Defra, and the Welsh and Scottish Government, to keep the evidence base up-to-date. We are reviewing options for doing this and will communicate the process for doing this soon. For farmers and growers, we will work closely with Defra future farming to ensure we align with their future regulation initiatives.

VISITS

29. When can I expect to be visited?

For users of professional PPPs, a risk-based visit programme will begin after the 22 June 2022 deadline to register for the Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations 2020. HSE are currently conducting visits to distributors of PPPs (as the relevant regulator for these operators). In the future, other regulators, including local authorities, may also undertake visits under the Official Controls Regulations.

30. What is the purpose of the visits?

The purpose of a visit is to check how well you are complying with your duties under plant protection product law.

31. What will happen during a visit?

Regulators should have their own guidance to help you prepare for what will happen during a visit. For example, [HSE has developed this guidance](#).



32. How often can I expect to be visited?

It is not possible to say how often individual businesses or organisations will be visited as this will be dependent on the risk profile of your organisation.

33. Will I get any notice of a visit?

Visits may be conducted without prior notice. This is not unusual and the law permits a visit at any reasonable time if they have reason to believe that it is necessary for the purpose of enforcing the OCR.

DEFINITIONS

34. What are plant protection products (PPPs)?

PPPs are used to control pests, weeds and diseases. Examples include:

- insecticides
- fungicides
- herbicides
- molluscicides
- plant growth regulators

PPPs can exist in many forms, such as solid granules, powders or liquids. They consist of one or more active substances, co-formulated with other materials. PPPs can be used with adjuvants. An adjuvant is a substance that enhances or is intended to enhance a PPP's effectiveness.

Biocides do not fall with scope of the 2020 Regulations.

Biostimulants and trace elements do not fall with scope of the 2020 Regulations.

35. What is meant by agriculture and horticulture?

This includes work in agriculture or horticulture, for example when farming or maintaining arable crops, forage crops or livestock, or when treating seeds.

36. What is meant by amenity?

This includes work in gardening, landscaping or grounds maintenance, or another role in an amenity setting such as in:

- schools
- parks
- sports grounds, including golf courses



- public or private property
- infrastructure, such as roads, railways and waterways
- utilities, such as transport and water companies

37. What is meant by forestry?

This includes work in forests or woodlands, such as in:

- tree management
- tree planting
- use of forests or woodland

38. What is meant by ‘retailer of amateur products’?

Retailers of amateur products are businesses that sell PPPs for amateur use. These products are not intended for professional use and users do not need professional certification to apply them. Businesses that sell both professional PPPs and amateur PPPs should register as a seller of PPPs for professional use.

POLICY AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

39. Have you informed businesses about these requirements before?

We issued a [policy statement](#) on GOV.UK in July 2021 which provided details of the 2020 regulations and was circulated widely to key stakeholder groups.

40. How do the 2020 Regulations impact pesticides legislation in GB?

Existing pesticides legislation remains unchanged. The 2020 Regulations supplement the [Plant Protection Products Regulations 2011](#) and the [Plant Protection Products \(Sustainable Use\) Regulations 2012](#). They enable regulators to carry out checks (official controls) throughout the supply chain to ensure compliance with the Regulations.

The 2020 Regulations will bring several benefits to Great Britain. It will enable Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government, working with the regulatory authorities, to understand how PPPs are being sold and used, to support businesses and organisations to comply with existing pesticides legislation and generally to ensure PPPs are used sustainably and in accordance with the conditions of use.



41. This is putting an extra burden on farmers and businesses – is it really necessary?

The Official Controls Regulations (OCR) PPPs create a legal requirement for sellers and users of professional PPPs to register their activities relating to PPPs with Defra. They supplement the pre-existing Plant Protection Products Regulations 2011 and the Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012.

Defra do not consider this requirement to be an unreasonable burden. All businesses within scope of the 2020 Regulations are already required by law to retain records of the PPPs they place on the market and/or use. We are asking for a small proportion of this information to enable us to establish and maintain an evidence base of GB businesses across the PPP supply chain, as required by the Regulations.

Plant protection products (PPPs) play a vital role in supporting Great Britain's plant health and crop production. When used safely, they protect crops and natural landscapes from native and invasive non-native species and do not create health risks for operators and consumers. This supports domestic food production and the maintenance of recreational, transport and amenity areas. However, it is essential to ensure they are used sustainably and in accordance with conditions of authorisation.

Implementing these regulations will bring several benefits to Great Britain. It will enable Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government, working with the regulatory authorities, to understand how PPPs are being sold and used, to support businesses and organisations to comply with existing pesticides legislation and generally to ensure PPPs are used sustainably and in accordance with the conditions of use.

Farmers are the biggest users of PPPs, and visits will be aimed at helping farmers to comply with pesticide regulations.

Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government have aimed to make the process for registering as easy and straightforward as possible.

42. Farmers and businesses are facing many challenges at the moment – this is inconvenient timing for us

We recognise this is a busy and difficult time for farmers. Reminders will be issued as we progress towards the deadline. These are statutory deadlines that you should endeavour to meet.



43. Registering with a form returned by email is a rather old-fashioned way of collecting this information

It is important to register as it is a legal requirement. Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government have aimed to make the process for registering as easy and straightforward as possible. Businesses have to be able to meet the statutory deadline, and this is the lightest-touch way for businesses and users of doing so.

You should endeavour to meet the deadlines for submission of your information.

44. Why is it important to register? / Why should I register for OCR?

If you use professional PPPs and any adjuvants in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), you have a legal duty to register under [the Official Controls \(Plant Protection Products\) Regulations 2020](#).

PPPs play a vital role in supporting the UK's plant health and crop production. Safe supply and use protect our crops and natural landscapes from native and invasive non-native species, supporting domestic food production and maintaining our recreational, transport and amenity areas. However, it is also essential to ensure PPPs are used sustainably and in accordance with conditions of use.

Implementing these regulations will bring several benefits to Great Britain. It will enable Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government, working with the regulatory authorities, to understand how PPPs are being sold and used, to support businesses and organisations to comply with existing pesticides legislation.