

Important information for: Businesses affected by the end of UK – European Union transition period on 31st December and UK – Kenya Trade Agreement

The UK government is continuing important preparatory work to start implementing concluded UK trade bilateral agreements which will come into force once the transition period with the European Union ends on 31 December 2020. Regardless of the agreement we reach with the European Union on our future trade relationship, the UK will be leaving the EU single market and customs union, and **trading rules will change**.

On Tuesday 8th December the UK-Kenya trade agreement was signed in London between Minister of State for International Trade Ranil Jayawardena and Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Industry, Trade and Enterprise Development Betty Maina. The trade agreement secures immediate and long-term duty-free access to the UK for Kenyan exports. The agreement seeks to replicate the intended effects of the EU agreement that was signed by the UK and Kenya in 2016. Ultimately, we want to achieve a comprehensive regional deal between the UK and the whole of the EAC, and we have ensured that this agreement is open to all EAC Partner States to join when they are ready to do so.

This agreement will promote increased trade and investment by putting our trading relationship on a more equitable, mature and business-like footing, supporting sustainable growth and poverty reduction. The trade agreement will provide a major boost for businesses and investors in Kenya and the United Kingdom and provide a much-needed stimulus for the economic development to counter the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The agreement will now be ratified in both Kenya and the UK before it is brought into force. We have agreed with Kenya an arrangement to provide adequate time to complete Parliamentary procedures while making sure there is no disruption on 1 January. The agreement will be laid in the UK parliament and published in the coming weeks.

For exports to qualify as duty exempt under the trade agreement, then the rules of origin requirements must be met. This is through the [EUR1 certificate of origin](#) form as used for Kenyan exports to the UK (and EU) currently.

A Customs & International Trade Helpline has been set up in the UK to provide advice to businesses. The number is + 44 300 322 9434. Working hours UK time are Monday to Friday 08.00 – 20.00 (NB reduced hours over festive period) and from 2nd January there will also be a Saturday service from 08.00 – 16.00.

Plant Health and SPS

The UK's Chief Plant Health Officer has written to KEPHIS with an update on the UK plant health controls from January 2021. There will be no changes to the operational processes for importing into GB from non-EU countries such as Kenya, for example pre-notification will continue to be required and checks will still be carried out at Border Control Posts.

The IT systems used to facilitate the pre-notification of imports of plants and other regulated articles will be changing, moving from the current PEACH system to a new service. However, GB importers will continue to use the existing system until they are directed to register for the new service. The timing and sequencing of this migration

will ensure a smooth and orderly transfer between systems, and will allow sufficient time for exporters to become familiar with the new service. Technical support will be available during, and after migration. For any direct imports to Scotland, importers should continue to notify the Scottish Government until the new GB wide IT system is rolled out.

For goods being exported from Kenya to GB via the EU then the following should be noted:

- a. Goods moving under transit arrangements will need to be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate (PC) issued by Kenya addressed to the UK plant health service (no change to what currently happens)
- b. Goods cleared into free circulation in the EU, including cut flowers being sent to Dutch flower auctions, which are subsequently exported to GB will be treated as imports from the EU and will require a PC issued by the competent authority of the member state consignments are sent from. Such imports will be subject to the phased introduction of import controls. Most cut flowers, fruits and vegetables from the EU will only need a PC from April.

Further details on the UK's phytosanitary import controls will be available on the [United Kingdom's country profile page on the International Phytosanitary Portal](#).

Any questions regarding changes being made to plant health controls should be directed to the UK's IPPC official contact point via UKNPPO@defra.gov.uk.

Further information is also provided through the links below:

- [Check how to export goods \(CHEG\)](#) helps UK businesses prepare their goods for export to another country.
- [Trade with the UK \(TWUK\)](#) provides overseas businesses with information on UK tariffs, regulations and other key processes to help them trade with the UK effectively.
- How to [export plants and plant products](#) (such as cut flowers) from the 1st of January 2021
- [Fresh fruit and vegetables standards from January 2021](#)

The Department for International Trade is also holding a series of webinars to assist with the transition. The webinars will cover changes that British businesses need to be aware of when trading with EU and non-EU countries from 1 January 2021, include a moderated Q&A. Whilst the webinars are aimed at British exporters, they may provide useful information for your business.

The next webinars are scheduled for

Thursday 17 December, 10.30 - 11.30 [Register here](#)

You can also watch a recording of a previous webinar on [YouTube](#).

For further help and assistance, you can also contact the Transition Period Enquiry Service: [Email via online form](#) The Enquiry service will ensure that enquiries are directed to the relevant UK government department or will provide an answer directly.

Alternatively you could contact the Department of International Trade team at the British High Commission in Kenya on DIT.KenyaDayOne@fco.gov.uk and we will do our best to help you.