

New animal and plant health safety rules coming into force in December

Preparations required by UK businesses have been set out today ahead of imminent new regulations aimed at modernising protections against animal diseases and plant pests as well as improving food safety.

In-line with our commitment to maintaining high standards of biosecurity, the UK will implement EU Smarter rules for safer food (SRSF) regulations from 11pm on Friday 13 December 2019.

The package will modernise, simplify and improve existing health and safety standards for the agri-food chain. It will take a risk-based approach to animal, plant and public health protection, introducing more efficient pest and disease control measures.

SRSF regulations coming into place on this date are divided into two areas and will affect businesses in the following industries:

- The Official Controls Regulation (OCR) applying to all UK businesses involved in trade in animals and products of animal origin (POAO)
- The Plant Health Regulation (PHR) applying to all UK businesses involved in the production, manufacture, supply and regulation of plants, seeds, timber and plant products.

Defra has directly communicated with businesses affected by these changes on what preparations they need to make. It is crucial these preparations are undertaken to ensure businesses can continue to operate with the import and export of these products.

These changes include:

- For animal and animal by products businesses: Using an improved IT system TRACES (NT) to log imports from beyond the EU and new look import forms.
- For plant, seed and timber businesses: A large increase in the number of plant passports required as well as changes to the content and format of plant passport applications forms for businesses.

The new regulations will apply to the UK in all Brexit scenarios. If the UK were to leave the EU without a deal, the regulations will be retained by the Withdrawal Act and will continue to apply subject to any amendments Parliament may agree.

[Further information on the SRSF regulations, and what changes this entails for UK businesses, is available on GOV.UK.](#)