

Oifig Faisnéise  
Áras Talmhaíochta  
Sráid Chill Dara  
Baile Átha Cliath 2

Tel: (01) 607 2802  
Fax: (01) 662 1165



Department of  
**Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine**  
An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara**

Press/Information Office  
Agriculture House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

E-mail: [info@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:info@agriculture.gov.ie)  
Website: [www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie)

---

**PRESS RELEASE**

---

244/12

05 December 2012

**MCENTEE ANNOUNCES TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF ASH PLANTING**

The Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Shane McEntee TD, has today announced a temporary suspension of the grant aiding of new ash plantations under the Department's afforestation schemes until more information is gathered regarding surveillance results, the risk of the disease establishing in Ireland and the effects the disease might have on our existing ash plantations.

This precautionary decision will not affect landowners who have already planted with ash. All registered foresters are being advised of this suspension and of the facility to substitute ash with another species - (i) for all future applications under the afforestation schemes and (ii) for clients with currently valid technical approvals that includes ash, who intend planting. Over the last three weeks, Department staff has been carrying out targeted surveillance inspections of sites planted with imported ash, forest and non-forest nurseries, roadsides and farms.

The full picture from this survey will not be known until the New Year. Speaking today Minister McEntee said *"It is important that we continue our aim of eradication of the disease and I am pleased that the Department has now provided training on the winter symptoms of the disease to staff internally but also to Teagasc foresters, Coillte staff and to private forestry contractors. The more trained personnel we have looking out for this disease in an organised fashion the better"*. The Minister added *"I have discussed the issue of planting ash at length with my Northern Ireland colleague Minister Michelle O' Neill MLA and we both feel that we are at the start of a planting season that extends until April or May next year and before carrying out any further ash planting, we should have as much information as possible about the disease and the results from the ash surveys on the island."*

**Notes to editors**

The procedure to change species involves the applicant or his/her agent sending an amended species map and Species table to 'Approvals section, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, Johnstown Castle Estate, Wexford'. On 12 October DAFM announced the first finding of *Chalara fraxinea* in Ireland. The outbreak, in County Leitrim was associated with a batch of trees that was planted in 11 sites. By 24 October all 11 sites were destroyed by cutting and burning. On 26<sup>th</sup> October legislation was introduced to ban the importation of plants from affected areas. On 6<sup>th</sup> November legislation was introduced to restrict the manner in which ash wood could be imported into the country. As of 27<sup>th</sup> November the UK had 257 confirmed cases of the disease mostly in the wild. Spores from *Chalara fraxinea* (*Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*) are wind borne and are produced from June to September

ENDS