

TRADER NOTICE No. 4 OF 2020

03rd July 2020

To: All registered professional operators and importers of plant and plant produce

Subject: First Interception of *Thaumetopoea processionea* (Oak Processionary Moth) into Ireland.

DAFM Horticulture and Plant Health have reported the first interception of *Thaumetopoea processionea*, commonly known as the Oak processionary moth (OPM). The single nest was found on one tree in a Dublin park and has been removed and destroyed, the wider intensified survey has not yielded additional findings to date. The Oak tree was part of a consignment which was imported from Belgium.

Ireland has a Protected Zone status under the EU Plant Health legislation for this pest.

Professional Operators including Nurseries, Garden Centres, Landscapers, Public Parks, and Local Authorities are asked to be extremely vigilant for the presence of this pest, especially where Oak trees are established. OPM caterpillars cause damage to Oak trees and pose a risk to human health because the body of the caterpillar is adorned with numerous irritating hairs. Contact with the hairs can provoke allergic reactions manifested as skin rashes, conjunctivitis and respiratory problems such as pharyngitis and asthma.

Suspected sightings in Ireland should be notified immediately to DAFM contacts below. Professional Operators should not attempt to move or destroy nests of OPM caterpillars as they pose a human health risk.

Controls for the Importation of Oak are set out in Trader Notice 9 of 2019. Pre- Notification of the Importation of all Oak as set out in S.I. 30 of 2020 and Trader Notice 1 of 2020. These notifications should be emailed to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine at the following email address: plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie

For more information on Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 and OPM, please click on the following links: <https://www.agriculture.gov.ie/media/migration/farmingsectors/planthealthandtrade/OPM290719.pdf>

In the event that you have any queries in relation to this matter, please contact this office either by e-mailing plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie or alternatively by telephone (01) 5058885.

Yours sincerely,

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