

An overview of EU rules on wood packaging material

Plant health is one of the responsibilities of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection, as part of its overall role to ensure the safety of food and protection of consumers in the EU.

Preventing organisms harmful to plants or plant products from being introduced into and spreading within the EU, and regulating imports from third countries in line with international plant health standards, are among the principle objectives of EU plant health legislation.

In keeping with these objectives, new EU requirements for wood packaging material, designed to stop potentially harmful plant pests from entering the EU in wood packaging, entered into force in March 2005.



Scope

Wood Packaging Material in use: Wood or wood products (excluding paper products) used in the transport of objects of all kinds for supporting, protecting or carrying a commodity. This includes crates, drums, packing cases, load boards and pallets.

Dunnage for non-wood cargo: Wood used to wedge or support a non-wood commodity but which does not remain associated with the commodity.

For further information:

The Food Safety website of DG Health & Consumer Protection:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/plant/index_en.htm

The official website for the International Plant Protection Convention:

<https://www.ippc.int/IPP/En/default.jsp>

Key Rules for Wood Packaging Materials entering the EU

The EU requirements for wood packaging material and dunnage are based on the 2002 FAO International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) n° 15. Directive 2004/102/EC, which entered into force on 1 March 2005, requires the following measures to be taken for wood packaging material and dunnage entering the EU from all third countries¹:

- the wood must be either **heat treated** or **fumigated with methyl bromide**, in line with ISPM15 procedures;
- the wood must be officially marked with the **ISPM15 stamp**;
- from March 2006, all wood packaging material imported into the EU will have to be **debarked**.

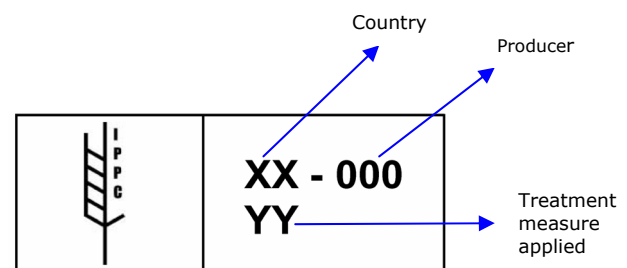
These requirements **do not apply to**:

- wood of 6mm thickness or less;
- wood packaging material made entirely from processed wood produced using glue, heat and pressure, such as plywood, oriented strand board and veneer;
- wood packaging material used in intra-Community trade.

Dunnage must meet the same criteria as wood packaging material. However, it is exempted until the end of 2007 if it is made of wood free from bark, pests and signs of live pests.

ISPM15 Mark

Wood packaging material entering the EU should carry the ISPM15 mark, which has the universally recognisable, non-language specific **IPPC logo** and **3 codes** (country, producer and treatment measure applied). For debarked wood, the letters "DB" should also be on the mark. The mark allows for easy verification that the wood meets the necessary requirements during inspection at the point of export or import. Markings should be legible, visible, permanent and non-transferable. The use of the mark also allows the import requirements for wood packaging material to remain a **paperless** system.



For packaging material which already existed before 1 March 2005, a mark consisting only of the 3 codes and without the IPPC logo will be accepted until the end of 2007.

Approval for the use of the ISPM15 mark must be obtained from the National Plant Protection Organisation or an organisation officially mandated by the NPPO.

¹ except Switzerland