

To: Scottish Processing Companies &
Scottish Ware Importers

Our ref: E1107248
2 December 2010

Dear Sirs

POTATO BROWN ROT: IMPORT OF POTATOES FROM EGYPT

I am writing to inform you that the controls on imports of Egyptian ware potatoes will be maintained for the 2010/11 import season. The controls under the Potatoes Originating in Egypt (Scotland) Regulations 2004 will roll forward as per Commission Decision 2009/839/EC (copy enclosed).

The import of Egyptian potatoes is prohibited unless they are grown in an area recognised by the EC as being free from the brown rot bacterium *Ralstonia solanacearum* and they must also comply with detailed plant health conditions. These conditions include requirements on Egypt to register traders and to test seed potatoes that are used to produce the export crop. There is also the potential for the derogation to be withdrawn and the introduction of a complete ban should there occur, across the EU, 5 interceptions of brown rot affected Egyptian potatoes *and* that this indicates that the measures are inadequate to protect the Community.

Imported consignments will be inspected at the point of entry into the EU and samples tested for latent brown rot infection. The charge to be applied for the laboratory testing of imported Egyptian potatoes will be £37.50.

On Arrival at Place of Destination in Scotland

- Companies wishing to pack, wash or otherwise process Egyptian potatoes are required to apply to the Scottish Government for **annual** authorisation.
- Ware lots from Egypt will be subject to laboratory testing at the point of entry into the EU. If there are more than 5 confirmed interceptions of potato brown rot across the EU and

these show that control measures in Egypt do not provide sufficient safeguards against the disease, the importation of ware potatoes from Egypt will be prohibited.

- Importers will bear the cost of laboratory testing per stock sampled (currently £37.50 for Egyptian stocks).
- Any potatoes found to be infected will be destroyed and disposed of under the Department's control.
- Storage premises, machinery and other potatoes which may have come into contact with an infected consignment may also be placed under statutory control.
- As a requirement of their authorisation, processors/packers must inform the Scottish Government of any direct imports to Scotland.

These arrangements will apply throughout the forthcoming winter and spring months. We would like to encourage everyone to continue to protect Scottish potato production against potato brown rot and to comply with the measures.

If your company wishes to apply for authorisation please write to me at The Scottish Government, Plants, Horticulture and Potatoes, Spur D, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD or by email at:

yvonne.hay@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me at the above address.

Yours faithfully

Yvonne Hay
Plants, Horticulture and Potatoes