



Plant Health: Protecting Scotland's Horticulture

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Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland



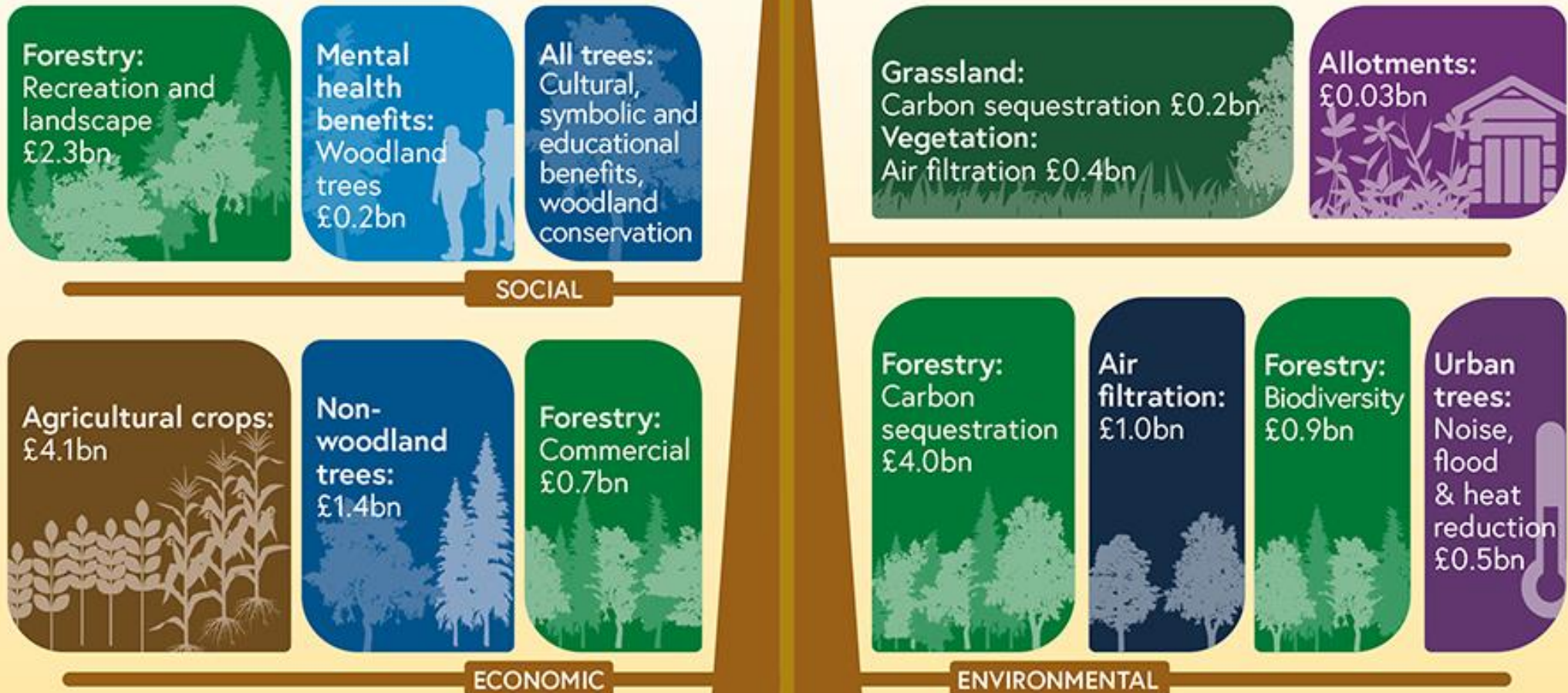
Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland



- ❖ Build collaboration in plant health across agriculture, forestry, horticulture and the wider environment
- ❖ Scottish Plant Health Strategy
- ❖ Research, education and best practice
 - The Plant Health Centre
- ❖ Outbreak response
- ❖ *'Plant pests and diseases do not respect borders'*
– Collaboration (Defra, DAs, EU, etc.)



The Importance of Plants



Summary of the annual value that our plants provide to UK Society.
What makes up the £15.7bn annual value of plants?

Risks from plant pests and diseases are increasing due to...

- ❖ Increased global trade
- ❖ Continued rise in internet shopping
- ❖ Increased international travel /tourism
- ❖ A changing climate
- ❖ Reduced portfolio of chemical control options



Plant Health Risk Register: Steady increase in entries.....



The total number of pests and scenarios on the UK Plant Health Risk Register, illustrating that the number of pests included is steadily rising over time. Note that some pests (e.g. *Xylella fastidiosa*) have multiple risks and are counted multiple times on this graph.

Data from Richard McIntosh, Assistant Chief Plant Health Officer, Defra
Currently 1406 pests and pathogens on the register (Feb, 2023)

Some examples of recent introductions/findings.....



Cane Canker of blackberry

Caused by: *Gnomoniopsis idaeicola*

Main points:

- ❖ Causes necrosis, canker, and wilting
- ❖ First reported in NW USA on wild blackberry 2010
- ❖ First report in Europe (Serbia) 2019
- ❖ Found for first time in GB 2022

Another recent introduction/finding..... blueberry rust



Blueberry rust

❖ **Caused by:** *Thekopsora minima*

❖ **Main points:**

- Needs two hosts to complete its lifecycle; blueberry and conifers (*Tsuga*)
- First found in NE America and Japan but has now spread to other parts of the world
- First found in GB in 2021
- No longer meets criteria as a GB quarantine pest (~ too wide spread), now regulated as a non-quarantine pest (RNQP) and controlled through regulation of planting stock (Nov. 2022)

The impact of EU exit on trade/inspections in Scotland

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Imports	RoW	130	58	99	99	70	17	94
	EU	-	-	-	-	-	2615	2761
Exports	RoW	254	275	212	215	189	225	157
	EU	-	-	-	-	-	1892	1257

- ❖ RoW trade, mostly exotic fruit imports into Glasgow and Edinburgh airports
- ❖ There were no inspections carried out on ‘imports’ from other member states when UK in EU
- ❖ Leaving the EU has increased our import/export inspections by roughly 10 – 20 fold
- ❖ But... need to balance trade with maintenance of good biosecurity

Plant Biosecurity Strategy for GB (2023-2028)

The vision:

To protect Great Britain's plants through a strong partnership of Government, industry and the public, working together to reduce and manage risks posed by plant pests and pathogens, and facilitate safe trade



Plant biosecurity strategy: Highlights

❖ Four outcomes:-

- A world class biosecurity regime
- A society that values healthy plants
- A biosecure plant supply chain
- An enhanced technical capability



A world class biosecurity regime

❖ Risk & Horizon Scanning

- Strengthen the guidance on reporting of notifiable plant pests and pathogens

❖ Regulatory Regime

- Introduce new biosecurity measures on personal imports and high-risk trees

❖ Outbreak Readiness

- Develop a new GB wide, Plant Health Data System to support the emergency response to outbreaks



A society that values healthy plants

❖ Raising awareness

- Work with 30 signatories of the new (Public Engagement) Plant Health Accord to raise awareness of plant health across GB



❖ Education Sector

- Work with the Royal Society of Biology and the National STEM Learning Centre to embed biosecurity in the National Curriculum
- Expand the Royal Society of Biology Plant Health Professional register to encourage greater participation across sectors



A biosecure plant supply chain

❖ Intelligence and Monitoring

- Work with industry to improve intelligence on horticultural and tree supply chains, their resilience and bottlenecks

❖ Supply chains

- Work with the UK Plant Health Alliance to develop a new 5-year roadmap for the Plant Healthy certification scheme

❖ Domestic production

- Invest in the quality, quantity and diversity of domestic seed and sapling supply



Introducing the
Plant Healthy Self Assessment Tool

Help protect your business and our industry against potential losses and disruption caused by plant pests and diseases.



“ Overall a really useful tool to help identify or confirm weaknesses in a business's biosecurity, this then gives a great structure to work from to fulfil the missing documentation.

GAVIN COOPER, GENERAL MANAGER,
PRIOR PARK GARDEN CENTRE

Take the free assessment at
planthealthy.org.uk

Tel: 0333 003 3550 Email: services@hta.org.uk

An enhanced technical capability

❖ Core Capability

- Deliver the new £4.5m virtual Centre for Forest Protection

❖ Collaboration and Innovation

- Work with UKRI to explore further opportunities for collaborative investment in fundamental and applied plant science

❖ International

- Continue to support GB's active participation in the Euphresco research network



Plant Health Centre: Aims

Single access
point for advice
and knowledge

Focus on
Scotland's plant
health needs

Integrate plant
health across
sectors

Complement not
duplicate work of
other Scottish
and non-Scottish
orgs



Conclusions

- ❖ Plant health risks will always be there and if anything are increasing due to:-
 - EU exit, new markets, etc.
 - Climate change
 - Access to chemical control
- ❖ Launch of the Plant Biosecurity Strategy highlights areas for future work:-
 - Partnership working, increased vigilance -
 - international trade is not risk free
 - Targeted research, increased training, awareness raising





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