



ORNAMENTAL AQUATIC TRADE ASSOCIATION LTD

"The voice of the ornamental fish industry"

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Potential impact of COVID-19 on ornamental aquatic imports to the UK

OATA is aware that UK Government agencies and teams are putting measures in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, in order to reduce the possible impact to imports. We provide below our current understanding specifically for ornamental aquatic imports. Also, measures we request our industry to undertake with immediate effect so as to assist staff at Border Control Posts at this time:

- **Airline carriers** – aquatic importers and exporters are advised to be in regular contact with their airline carrier(s) and encourage them to keep them updated on potential flight disruptions and possible alternatives when necessary.
- **Arrivals of live ornamental aquatic animals to Border Control Posts (BCPs (formerly known as Border Inspection Posts))** – measures are in place for APHA and FHI staff having to physically handle consignments. We request importers to cascade to their suppliers to ensure that they use clean packaging i.e. not re-using packaging and to advise of any disinfection procedures used prior to sealing and shipping. Although imports of ornamental fish are anticipated to be least impacted, delays may occur in the event of staff shortages although it is our understanding that contingency measures are in place. With immediate effect, we would ask ornamental aquatic animal importers to start attaching health certificates to CHEDs (Common Health Entry Documents) in order to assist APHA staff.
- **Aquaculture Production Businesses inspected by the Fish Health Inspectorate** – for inspection of APBs, FHI Inspectors will apply additional biosecurity measures as deemed necessary e.g. enquiring if anyone at the premises is unwell, increasing social distance (not visiting areas where there are a number of staff/visitors) etc. APBs are requested to provide correspondence, forms and documents electronically to assist Inspectors in the event they have to remote work/work from home and can assist logistically whilst Inspectors are on site by being able to print off required paperwork for them if needed.
- **Imports requiring CITES permits and ornamental aquatic plant imports** - we await further guidance from the relevant agencies and will advise as soon as this information becomes available.
- **Communicating to customers and Border Control Post staff** – we advise all OATA members to inform their customers (and Border Control Post agencies as applicable) as to the measures they are taking at the current time to protect public health e.g. increased biosecurity measures, using clean packaging, disinfection procedures etc. This can be communicated via email shots, social media and notices.

Information is subject to change on a daily basis as the current situation develops. OATA will advise accordingly as soon as further information becomes available.