

## When to send your collections

If you are not able to safely dry your seeds to 15%RH and store them at -20°C, it is critical that you ship your material to the MSB as soon as possible after collection. If you can store seeds safely, in line with the international seed conservation standards, you may wish to send your collections in bigger batches, at the end of a collecting season, for example. As far as possible, seeds should be cleaned prior to sending.

## What to send

Sending a 'collection' to the MSB consists of three components - data, seeds and herbarium specimens. Collectively we refer to a group of collections shipped together as a **batch**. Your collections must be accompanied by the relevant documentation.

### 1. Prepare your materials

#### Labelling

All plant material (herbarium specimens, seeds, DNA) should be labelled with a unique collection number at the time of collection. For shipment, the collector should ensure labels are both inside and outside specimen bags or containers. Herbarium specimens should be enclosed between labelled sheets of newspaper, as well as a labelled jeweller's tag attached to each specimen. Ensure the same number is on herbarium specimen, seed and data. This is a lot less laborious if done as collections are made.

#### Data

Accompanying field data should be cleaned and ready to send at the time of shipment or travel. Check each entry against the material to make sure they match exactly. Preparing the data will also allow you to form the table of contents for your shipment, which will be attached to the donation document.

### 2. Contact MSB

Make contact with your coordinator to let them know exactly what you are sending and check they are able to

receive it. This is a good time to send your cleaned data to your coordinator ahead of the shipment. Do not ship any materials until you receive the ok. At the MSB the processing manager Janet Terry (j.terry@kew.org) will check which of your specimens require specific permits or packaging for import into the UK. Be aware that the UK may have different quarantine regulations to your own country which you will need to observe.

### 3. Assemble documentation

#### Donation document

There are several options for how material can be donated to MSB. The majority of organisations we work with will have formal partnership agreements (MOC/ABSA/MOU) in which the terms of material transfer and use have already been determined. In this case a **Notification of Transfer** can be used for all materials.

However, when sending material under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) partners may use the **Standard Material Transfer Agreement (SMTA)**. This only covers seeds so a Notification of Transfer is required for the herbarium specimens.

#### Donation letter

For organisations that do not yet have a formal partnership agreement with the MSB (for example if there is only a grant agreement) we need to define the terms of transfer; what Kew can and cannot do with that material. For this we can use the Kew **donation letter** which lays out standard terms.

If you are shipping crop wild relative species listed on Annex 1 of the ITPGRFA and your organisation is not an MSB partner, an SMTA can be used for seed but this does not cover herbarium specimens. These require a Kew donation letter.

#### Notification of transfer

This is a light touch way of exchanging material between our organisations. It refers back to the terms of exchange

and use described in our partnership agreement. You can either fill in the table directly or attach an additional list of material.

The Notification of Transfer is also our way of confirming we have received what was sent. On arrival we will check the contents, sign and return a copy to you.

#### Standard Material Transfer Agreement

The SMTA is a provision of the ITPGRFA, which recognises that food security is an issue which must be addressed on a global scale. The Treaty came into force in 2004 and currently there are 140 contracting parties. Its purpose is to facilitate access to genetic resources for research with a mechanism for benefit sharing. Species covered by the Treaty are listed on Annex 1.

Your coordinator will provide you with a copy of the SMTA. You should complete details of provider and recipient and list the material to be shipped. There are a number of options for how the SMTA can be used. Option 1, requiring signature from both the donor and recipient organisation is Kew's preferred option.

Each country signed up to the Treaty will have a national focal point who should be able to help with problems – find your treaty focal point here <http://www.planttreaty.org/>. You are required to inform ITPGRFA Secretariat once a year of the SMTAs you have issued and their details. There is an online system to do this or you can e-mail.

#### CITES

You should identify any CITES listed species within your shipment and obtain the appropriate export permit. At the MSB, we will check the list of species for shipment which you send to us in advance and apply for the import permit. It is crucial that you do not send anything until you have both the import and export permits. The export permit must be stamped by customs in

country before the shipment leaves and the import permit must be stamped by customs in the UK before we receive it.

If only some of your material is CITES listed it may be worth separating them out into two boxes to make it easy for customs to identify what exactly is covered by the import and export permits.

If you belong to a CITES Registered Scientific Institute (your co-ordinator will advise you) you can ship CITES material to the UK without permits, quoting the registration numbers of your and our institute.

#### Plant Health

Some kinds of plant material are covered by Plant Health restrictions when importing to the UK (see the useful links section)

Material that would normally require a phytosanitary certificate to enter the UK may be sent under the MSB's license from DEFRA to import restricted plant material. Under the terms of this license, such material needs to be packaged in a particular way and be accompanied by DEFRA's 'Letter of Authority'. Janet Terry at MSB will provide you with advice on how to pack materials, and supply our Letter of Authority to include with each shipment. You will need to complete sections 1 and 13.

#### 4. Package seeds and specimens

Fresh seeds should be posted in breathable cloth bags. However, if the seeds have been dried to 15% eRH, they can be shipped in airtight foil bags.

Avoid sending loose seeds in the foil bags, rather place the whole collection still in its paper or cloth bag, within the foil bag. Wet fleshy fruits should be shipped in sealed plastic bags to avoid leakage breaking down the box and ruining herbarium specimens. Ideally you should use one bag per collection, labelled inside and out.

#### Herbarium specimens

Herbarium specimens should be fully dried at the point of sending. They should be shipped unmounted between labelled sheets of newspaper with a jewellers tag label attached to each separate piece. Multiple herbarium specimens can be packed between cardboard sheets and tied in bundles to protect them during transit.

#### Quarantine material

If you are advised by Kew that your collections include UK quarantine species there are specific instructions for how these collections should be packaged. Both seeds and herbarium specimens need to be wrapped in at least 3 layers of packaging separating them from any other plant materials. Failure to do this means the whole batch is classified as quarantine.

It is important you follow your own country's phytosanitary regulations. Your Plant Health Authority will advise on this. If they require a seed dressing, please ensure the shipment is clearly labelled on the outside so that it can be unpacked appropriately on arrival.

Leave packing the material into the box until you have everything else ready as assembling the relevant paperwork can take time. It is a good idea to leave sealing the box until you are at DHL/customs in case they want to see inside.

#### 5. Send the shipment

Pro forma invoice and air waybill  
You will need to include a proforma invoice and an air waybill with your shipment. These can be generated online using the DHL eMailShip: [http://www.dhl.co.uk/content/dam/downloads/g0/express/emailship\\_page/userguides/dhl\\_emailship\\_userguide\\_en.pdf](http://www.dhl.co.uk/content/dam/downloads/g0/express/emailship_page/userguides/dhl_emailship_userguide_en.pdf). Alternatively you can complete a proforma invoice at the DHL office.

#### Arranging shipment

Your coordinator will provide you with details of the MSB DHL account. There is no charge to your organisation for shipping seeds to MSB. You can arrange DHL to collect shipments using this account number. Once you have sent the material notify your coordinator and Janet Terry ([j.terry@kew.org](mailto:j.terry@kew.org)) at MSB. You will need to provide the 10 digit airway bill number and the number of boxes sent, so the batch can be tracked.

#### Useful links

<http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/publications/documents/feralImportersGuideRev3.13.pdf>

Document	Purpose	Requirements
Donation document (Notification of Transfer, Standard Material Transfer Agreement, or Donation letter)	This confirms agreement between you and RBG Kew outlining what Kew can and cannot do with the material you have sent. It also enables Kew to know what material has been sent, check the contents on arrival, and acknowledge receipt of the material.	One original and two copies, all in box
CITES import and export permits (if required)	These permits are required to transport listed species and are issued by the relevant national authorities. A permit is issued only when transfer of seed or herbarium material does not put the existence of a particular species under threat. CITES registered institutions can exchange material under approved labels, rather than permits.	Outside and inside the box
Letter of Authority (if required)	This refers to Kew's plant health licence from Defra, and provides the shipper, their plant health authorities, and the customs officials in UK with detail of the species and materials that MSB can receive under plant health licence.	One original outside the box and one inside
Phytosanitary certificates/collecting permits as required by country of export	Phytosanitary certificates are issued by authorities to state that plant material is free from pests and diseases, which is often required for controlled species that are relatives of important crops, to minimize risk to agriculture in the receiving country.	One original inside the box
Notification of any seed treatment with hazardous substances	This is to ensure that the appropriate health and safety measures can be put in place for staff working with the seeds.	Outside the box and inside
DHL air waybill and associated proforma invoice, list of contents	This is the package of documents required by couriers to pick up and transport material to Kew. It also enables tracking and customs processing of the items sent.	One original, outside of box