



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine

# Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), *Thaumetopoea processionalae*

## Maintaining Our Protected Zone Status

Teagasc Plant Health Meeting 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020

s

• Declan Kealy

• DAFM



Horticulture  
& Plant Health

- Introduction – Background & Lifecycle
- OPM Interception – Ireland 2020
- Maintaining our Protected Zone
- Ireland's Quercus Opportunity



# OPM Background

- OPM – Native species of Central and Southern Europe
- Widely distributed in these area's
- Findings have expanded to Northern Europe
- First finding in the UK 2006 – London area
- First finding in Ireland June 2020



# OPM Lifecycle

**KEY**

- MID AUG - MID APRIL  
STAGE ONE: EGG
- MID APRIL - MID JULY  
STAGE TWO: CATERPILLAR
- MID JUNE - EARLY SEPT  
STAGE THREE: PUPA
- END JULY - LATE SEPT  
STAGE FOUR: MOTH



St. 1 Mid Aug-April

Egg

St. 2 Mid April-July

Caterpillar

St. 3 Mid June-E/Sept

Pupa

St. 4 End July-late Sept

Moth

# OPM Lifecycle

## Stage 1

Very difficult to detect  
on Oak trees



Mid-August to  
April



# OPM Lifecycle



Stage 2

Caterpillar

Mid April-July



# OPM Lifecycle

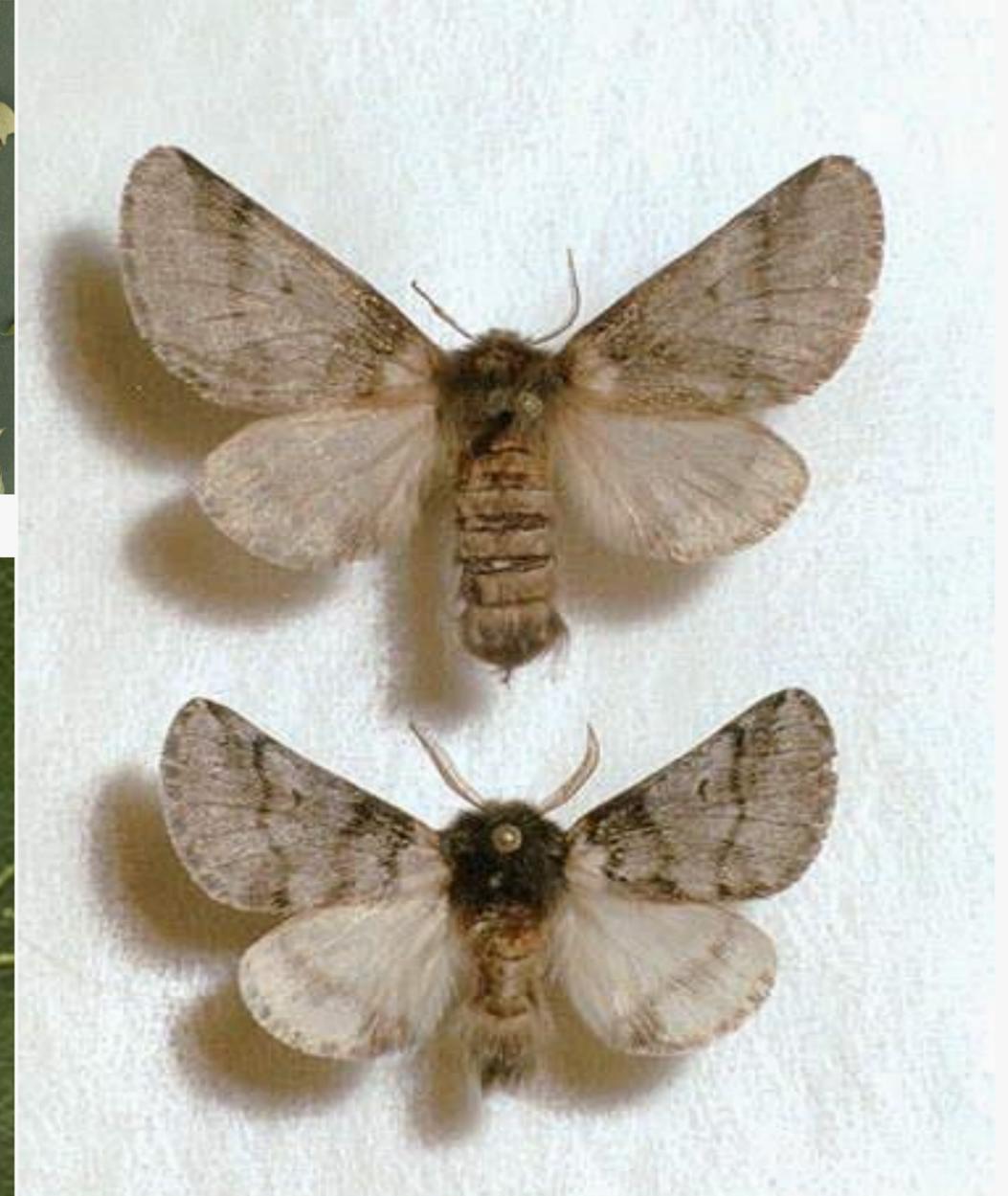
Stage 3  
Mid-June / early September



Pupa

Stage 4

OPM Moth



# Severe defoliation of Oaks

- Caterpillars cause severe defoliation to Oak trees



# Human Health Concern



# Human Health concern

We are asking the public to remain vigilant for sightings of caterpillar nests

Caution - **Do Not Touch**

Report sightings immediately by e-mailing:

[plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie)

or by calling (01) 5058885.

You can also use our all Ireland TreeCheck app or visit

[www.treecheck.net](http://www.treecheck.net)



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## First OPM Finding Ireland 2020

- First finding of OPM in Ireland's protected zone.
- Reported to DAFM by a member of the public who spotted it on an Oak tree in Dublin's Dargle Park.
- Upon receiving the report DAFM acted swiftly to eradicate the pest and submit samples to the lab.
- The tree in question was traced to a recent import consignment from Belgium which was removed and destroyed.



# First OPM Finding on the Island of Ireland June 2020

- The Interception was reported to the EU commission on TRACES
- Following the finding on one Oak tree a wider intensified survey in the Dublin area has not yielded any additional findings to date.
- OPM annual survey for 2020 is currently underway with no further findings to date.



# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

- A protected zone PZ is a zone in the EU in which one or more quarantine organisms are present in the EU but are absent from specific parts of the EU despite favourable conditions for them to establish themselves there.
- The presence would have an unaccepted economic, social or environmental impact.
- Irelands PZ for OPM is in place since 2014.
- Irelands first finding of OPM was from imported product and so is an interception.

# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

- Promote the growing/Use of Irish Quercus Oak trees.
- Strengthening our legislation for the import for Quercus of 8cm girth or greater and above 1.2m in height.
- Meeting specific criteria -Grown where OPM is not known to occur
  - or grown throughout their life in an area free from OPM established by the NPPO.
  - or under physical protection (Glass) which has been inspected by the relevant NPPO.
- **The Netherlands have informed DAFM that they cannot meet these requirements.**

# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

## Pre-notification of *Quercus* plants and trees into Ireland

- Notification in writing to DAFM 48hrs in advance with particulars of each consignment to include:
  - Intended date of arrival into Ireland
  - Intended destination
  - Genus, species and quantity
  - Identification number of the supplier of plant/trees
  - Name of country from which they have been consigned
- DAFM will inspect consignments to ensure they meet SI requirements.

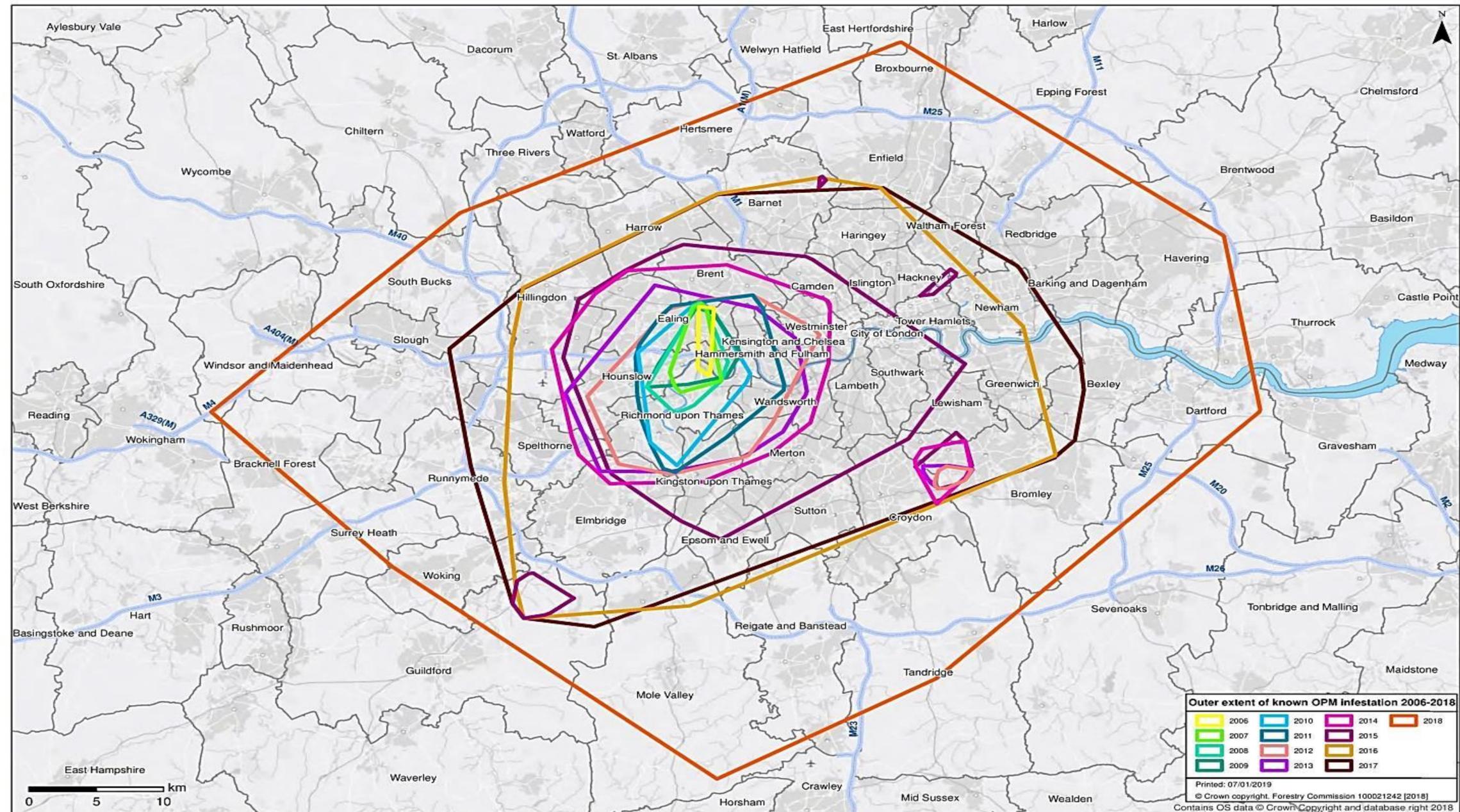
# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

- OPM surveys carried out since 2011  
Pheromone Trapping  
Lures
- Protected Zone established in 2014
- Intensive OPM survey 2020 in the  
Dublin area.
- Lures changed at 4week  
intervals.



# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

## The spread of OPM in the UK since the first finding in 2006



# OPM Tree Treatment Control in the UK



# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

Report all suspected cases:

[plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:plantandpests@agriculture.gov.ie)

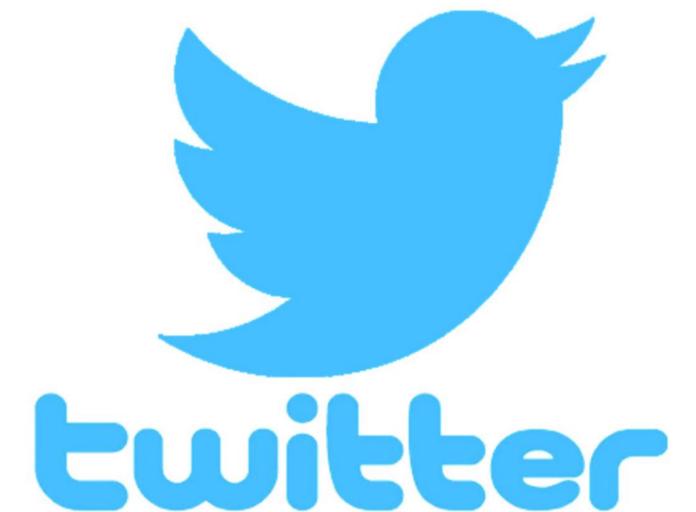
or by calling (01) 5058885.

You can also use our all Ireland TreeCheck app or visit

[www.treecheck.net](http://www.treecheck.net)

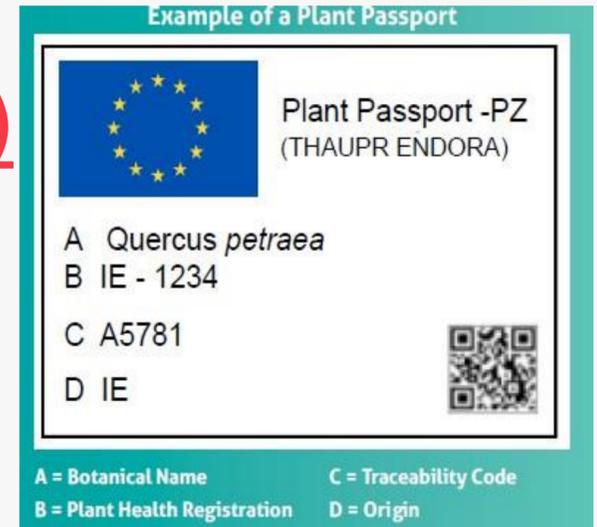
Social Media:

- Excellent way to alert the public
- Massive response to DAFM posts
- Well over a half a million views.



# Maintaining Our Protected Zone

New EU Plant Health Regulation(Regulation(EU)2016/2031) came into operation on 14th of December 2019.  
The objectives of the new Regulation are:



- Better protection of EU Plant Health, More focus on proactive action,
- The new Regulation focuses on reducing the risk of introducing pests to the EU Focusing attention on high risk plants,
- Expanding the range of plant operators to be registered with the competent authority,
- Applying stricter Protected Zone requirements,
- Requiring all plants for planting to be accompanied with a Plant Passport.

# the Plant Health & Biosecurity Strategy



## SCOPE

This strategy sets out the importance of plant health and biosecurity for Ireland as well as ensuring that all relevant stakeholders are aware of the risks to plant health in Ireland, and their role and responsibilities to reduce that risk. It focuses on working closely with key partners including other government departments and agencies, industry, local authorities, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), the scientific community, educators and all citizens.

## OBJECTIVES

To minimise the threat posed to plants by the potential introduction and establishment of plant pests and diseases. The creation of a strategy will provide cohesion and coordination, as well as a road map for delivery of specific, achievable, targeted actions which will be facilitated through wide collaboration and an agreed implementation plan.

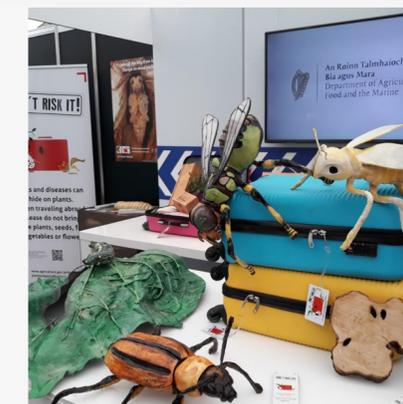
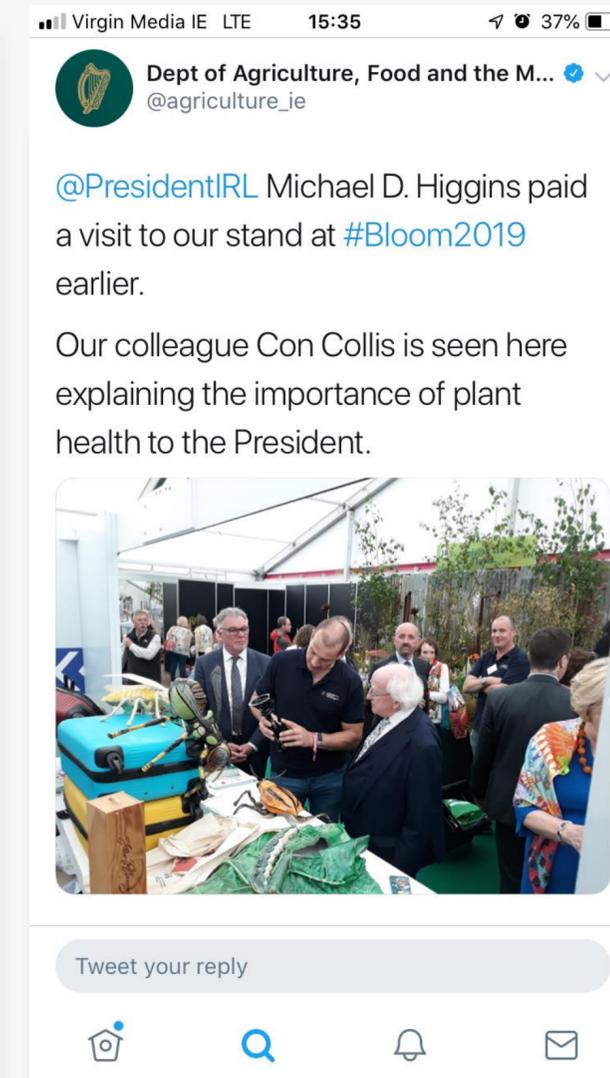
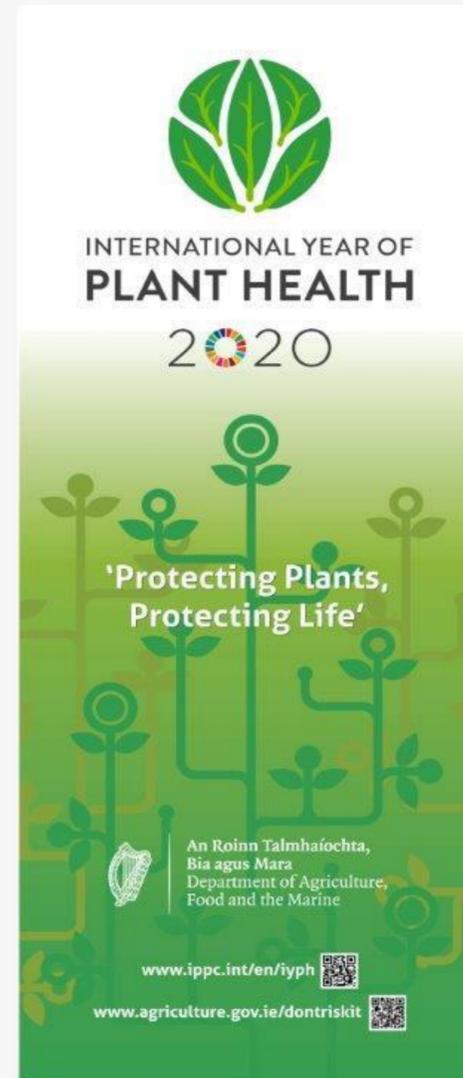


## KEY STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

# DAFM & Plant Health

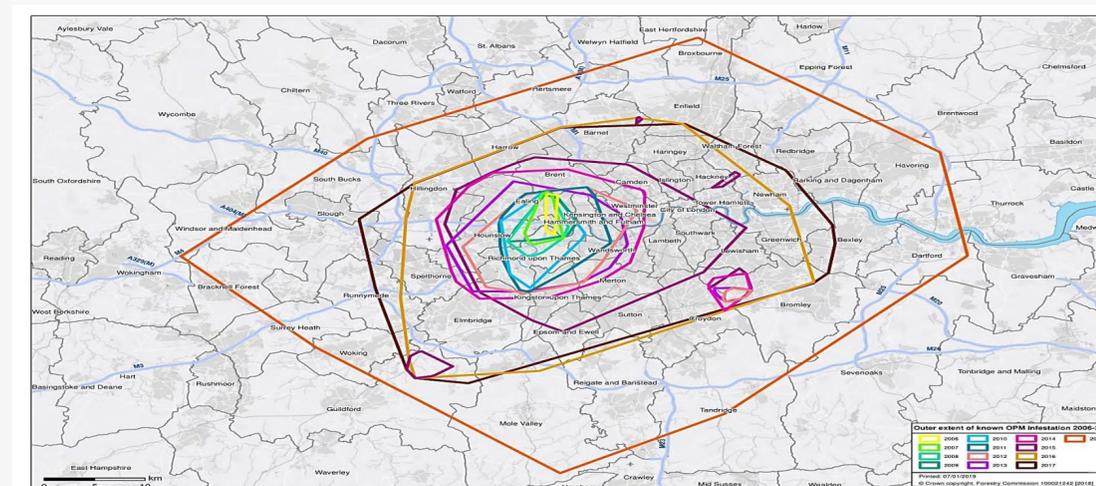
## Awareness Raising

- Social Media
- Events and Shows
  - Technical and Public
  - International Year of Plant Health 2020
- Public Notices
  - Ports and Airports
  - Newsletter/Magazines
  - Garden centres
- Website  
[www.agriculture.gov.ie/dontriskit/](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/dontriskit/)
- Traditional and technical media outlets
  - Articles

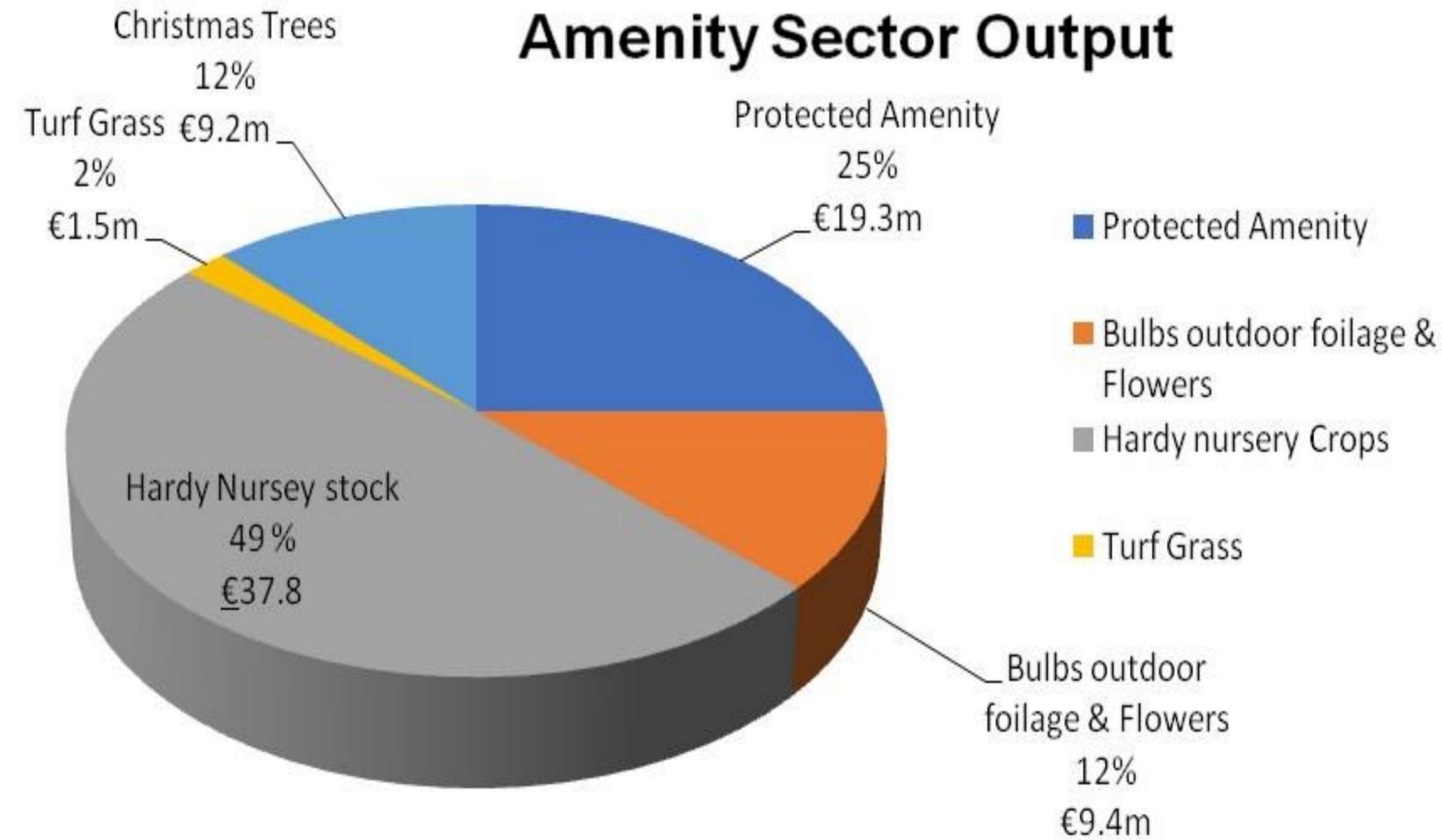


# Ireland's Quercus Opportunity

- Promote the sale of Irish grown Quercus Oak trees from Ireland's protected zone.
- Massive opportunity for the Irish sector to export to the UK and across the EU.
- Ireland can take advantage of the OPM learnings of other EU member states.
- Protecting our PZ is paramount



# Amenity Sector Output



DAFM estimates 2019 (total output value €77m)



*Thank You*

We would also like to thank the UK forestry commission  
for sharing information and OPM images



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