

REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA OAK MORTALITY TASK FORCE MAY 2001

UPDATES ON SUDDEN OAK DEATH

MORE HOSTS CONFIRMED WITH THE SUDDEN OAK DEATH PATHOGEN

The new *Phytophthora* associated with Sudden Oak Death was recovered from Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*) and bay laurel (*Umbellularia californica*) in several locations. On madrone, the pathogen causes leaf spots and cankers on small branches. On bay, the pathogen has only been recovered from the leaves. The pathogen has **not** been demonstrated to kill these tree species but the findings are significant because these foliar infections may allow for the rapid build-up of *Phytophthora*. The infections may serve as a reservoir for inoculum increasing the risk of infection of susceptible oaks and tanoak. The findings are a collaboration of researchers under the direction of David Rizzo at UC-Davis and Matteo Garbelotto at UC-Berkeley.

DIAGNOSTICS

A reliable molecular diagnostic tool based on polymerase chain reaction (PCR) technology is under development at Matteo Garbelotto's laboratory. So far, the technique can identify the new *Phytophthora* associated with Sudden Oak Death from fungal cultures and leaves infected by the pathogen. Work is underway to refine the technique for identification from bark and wood. Already the molecular diagnostic has helped elucidate the host range of the organism and determined where the pathogen is in the environment (from streams, rain and soil). Garbelotto will meet with representatives from CA Department of Food and Agriculture and United States Department of Agriculture in May to share the PCR protocol so it can be used to confirm samples from surveys and submissions by County Agriculture departments and others.

REGULATIONS

Resolutions calling for continued research funding and regulations to prevent spread of Sudden Oak Death were passed by the Eastern Plant Board and Western Plant Board at their spring meetings. These boards are comprised of representatives from state agriculture departments in the Eastern and Western United States. The boards work closely with the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on regulatory issues, policy and implementation. The Southern Plant Board passed a similar resolution in February 2001.

MONITORING - STATEWIDE SURVEY

The CA statewide survey group, led by Walter Mark, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo met on April 3rd to design a survey of Sudden Oak Death to support regulations and determine the pathogen's distribution in CA. The project is a cooperative effort of Cal Poly, UC-Berkeley, CA Department of Food and Agriculture, USDA-Forest Service and the COMTF. The survey will be carried out this summer and will focus on delimiting pathogen location in border areas of counties adjacent to known infested counties. David Rizzo and Matteo Garbelotto will both participate in pathogen confirmation and surveys of shrub species. Also on April 3, a group met in Oregon to outline survey protocols for Oregon.

EDUCATION

Trailhead posters to slow the spread of Sudden Oak Death are being posted in Sausalito, Marin County Parks and Openspace, Golden Gate National Recreation Area as well as additional signs in Marin Municipal Water District. Thanks once again to MMWD for their generous contribution toward this effort.

If you would like signs for your area contact:
Nicole Palkovsky at palkovsk@nature.berkeley.edu or
Kim Keirnan at kkeirnan@marin.org

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

CalFlora “a botanical resource for California on the internet” has put together an amazing site with information on the hosts of Sudden Oak Death. Scroll down to find photos and distribution maps of all known hosts at www.calflora.org/SOD/.

Nathan Rank and company at the Fairfield Osborn Reserve have updated their Sudden Oak Death website. The site has detailed maps and other information about this Sonoma County infestation. www.sonoma.edu/Org/Preserve/sickoakmap.html

Oregon Department of Agriculture has a revised pest alert and handy table listing hosts and symptoms. <http://www.oda.state.or.us/Plant/ppd/sod/sod.htm>

The USDA Forest Service, Southwest Oregon Forest Insect and Disease Service Center webpage has good information on USDA-FS Oregon’s concerns regarding Sudden Oak Death and Port Orford Cedar root disease. www.fs.fed.us/r6/rogue/swofidsc

MEETINGS

Over 100 people attended the **California Oak Mortality Task Force** meeting held **April 25 and 26th** in Felton. At the general meeting on Thursday there was lively debate on the need to regulate the new *Phytophthora* in soil, channeling grassroots political support and fund raising. The notes from the meeting and some of the talks from the training session will be posted at www.suddenoakdeath.org. The next full task force meeting is scheduled for September in Marin County with a tentative theme of ecological aspects of Sudden Oak Death.