



CALIFORNIA OAK MORTALITY TASK FORCE REPORT MAY 2007

MONITORING

The 2007 National *P. ramorum* Early Detection Stream Baiting Survey for Forests has recovered two *P. ramorum*-positive samples in two states. One of the positive recoveries was from Washington state and one from Mississippi. The Washington find has been confirmed via culture and PCR. The positive sample was recovered in a western Washington river, east of Seattle, and downstream from several confirmed nurseries, though the source of the inoculum has not been determined. Plans for surveying to locate the source are underway. In February 2006, a seasonal stream in Washington was also found *P. ramorum*-positive. The Mississippi water baiting confirmation was made from a ditch draining a *P. ramorum*-positive nursery. The pathogen has not been detected in vegetation outside the nursery, but plans for follow-up survey work are underway. For more information on the National *P. ramorum* Early Detection Stream Baiting Survey for Forests, contact Steve Oak at soak@fs.fed.us.

NURSERIES

A retail nursery in Tallahassee, Florida was found *P. ramorum*-positive in January 2007. The nursery was also found positive in 2006. The confirmations were made on three cultivars of *Camellia japonica*. Trace backs failed to identify a source for the infestation.

California had four new *P. ramorum*-positive nurseries identified in April, bringing the total number of 2007 nursery confirmations for the state to five. Three of the identified nurseries were retail facilities in quarantined counties found during nursery stock cleanliness inspections. None of the three retailers are under compliance or ship out of the quarantined counties. Two of the three sites have been positive for *P. ramorum* before.

The fourth *P. ramorum*-positive confirmation was made on *Loropetalum chinense* at a production nursery during their annual compliance agreement inspection. The nursery is under compliance and ships out of state (to NV only). *Loropetalum chinense* is on the APHIS list of *P. ramorum* associated plants, and was first reported by the Canada Food Inspection Agency in the summer of 2006. CDFA is still awaiting lab results on two additional samples from the compliance agreement sampling. This nursery was also found *P. ramorum*-positive in April of 2006 during a compliance agreement inspection.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) has completed approximately 15% of its *P. ramorum* annual certification inspections for the year. So far, *P. ramorum* has been found at two production nurseries. One nursery in Washington County was confirmed to have an infected block of *Camellia* and an infected block of *Rhododendron*. The plants were culture as well as PCR positive. The USDA's Confirmed Nursery Protocol (CNP) is underway. The second nursery, located in Clackamas County, had a *P. ramorum*-positive *C. sasanqua* 'Yuletide' plant. The pathogen was detected by PCR. CNP is underway.



In states outside the regulated and quarantine area, *P. ramorum* nursery surveys for 2007 are a part of the 2007 Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) program. Currently 18 states have signed agreements to conduct voluntary surveys in 2007 using the Nursery Survey Protocol posted at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram/survey.shtml. Data from these surveys will be entered into the National Agricultural Pest Information System (NAPIS) database. While surveys are underway, to date, no data has been posted to the database.

Twelve *P. ramorum*-positive nursery sites in five states have been identified to date in 2007 through federal or state inspections, nursery surveys, and/or other detections. Positive finds by state include: California(5), Florida(1), Mississippi(1), Oregon(2), and Washington(3).

FUNDING

A new grant program is available through the CA Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to help create innovative ways to assist with growth opportunities for California's specialty crops. As part of the federal Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004, CDFA is offering \$1 million in federal funds to grant applicants, with a maximum of \$100,000 each. Specialty crops are defined as fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

Examples of enhancing the competitiveness of specialty crops include research, promotional or implementation projects in the following areas: Nutrition, Trade Enhancement, Food Safety/Food Security, Plant Health Programs, Agriculture Education, "Buy Local" programs, Increased Consumption/Innovation, Improved Efficiency and Reduced Cost of Distribution Systems, Environmental Concerns and Conservation, Product Development and developing Cooperatives. Grant applications are due May 31st at 2 p.m. For more information, or to download the application, go to <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/egov/specialtycropgrants/>.

Fire Safe Sonoma has been awarded a grant through the California Fire Safe Council Grant Clearinghouse with funding from the Bureau of Land Management. The approximately \$150,000 grant provides funds for homeowners to help defray the costs of removing Sudden Oak Death-affected hazardous trees. Homeowner groups are also eligible to receive financial support for chipping activities to help minimize infested debris. The funding runs for 18 months starting October, 2007. For more information on this grant assistance program, contact Caerleon Safford at csafford@mcn.org or (707) 206-5467.

RESOURCES

The Bay Area Public Broadcasting TV station KQED featured "Plant Plague: Sudden Oak Death" on their QUEST program in April. The entire segment, along with additional pictures, a blog for comments and questions, educator resources, and important



links for further information, can be found on the Quest website at <http://www.kqed.org/quest/television/view/250>.

Chapter 1 of “Sudden Oak Death and *Phytophthora ramorum*: A Summary of the Literature” book has been posted to the CA Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) website at http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf/html/sod_literature_summary.html. Chapter 1 provides introductory and background information on Sudden Oak Death and *P. ramorum*, and has been posted along with Chapter 5, Management and Control of Diseases Caused by *P. ramorum*.

The Sudden Oak Death Science Symposium III website

(<http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf/sodsymposium/index.html>) has been updated to include slideshow, poster, and audio files from the conference. Click on the “Schedule of Events” link to see the full program with all relevant links. For the complete audio-visual experience, open the slideshow PDF and audio mp3 files and page through as you listen to the corresponding narration. Also available on the Symposium home page is a list of meeting participants with relevant contact information.

RELATED RESEARCH

Beckerman, J. and Ruhl, G. 2007. *Phytophthora citricola* causes a stem canker in black walnut (*Juglans nigra*). Plant Health Progress DOI: 10.1094 /PHP-2007-0420-01-BR. Online at <http://www.plantmanagementnetwork.org/update/current/>.

EDUCATION

The first of several Sonoma County community Sudden Oak Death workshops drew 70 attendees in Guerneville on April 21st. The workshops are primarily aimed at assisting landowners who need to manage *P. ramorum* killed trees to reduce fire and physical risks. For more information, contact Caerleon Safford at csafford@mcn.org or (707) 206-5467, or Chris Perry at cperry@sonoma-county.org or (707) 565-2050.

PERSONNEL

The COMTF Sudden Oak Death Outreach Coordinator Janice Alexander will be on maternity leave beginning May 14, 2007. In her absence, all COMTF outreach needs should be directed to Katie Palmieri at palmieri@nature.berkeley.edu or 916-435-3230. Janice plans to return to work in late summer.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4/30 – 5/3 – Western Plant Board 2007 Annual Meeting; Sun River, Oregon; For more information, go to the National Plant Board website at <http://nationalplantboard.org/meetings/index.html>.

10/15 – 10/18 - XVI International Plant Protection Congress 2007, Glasgow, UK; Full details on the recently announced call for papers can be found at:



<http://www.bcpc.org/IPPC2007/Call%5Ffor%5FPapers/>. For more information, contact Dr. Slawson, PHSI DEFRA, at: david.slawson@defra.gsi.gov.uk.