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<http://www.apsnet.org/meetings/abstracts.asp>

Brennan, J.; Cummins, D.; Kearney, S.; Choiseul, J.; Cahalane, G.; and Nolan, S. 2008. Investigating the threat of *Phytophthora ramorum* to Ireland: The current situation. *Phytopathology* 98:S25.

Phytophthora ramorum is a serious pathogen of trees and ornamental plants, causing a disease known as sudden oak death (SOD) in the USA, where it has had major environmental & economic impacts. Plants affected by *P. ramorum* show a range of symptoms such as leaf blight, stem canker, and tip dieback. The pathogen was first detected in the USA in the mid 1990s, Europe 2001 (it was first named in 2001 but the disease was first detected in early 1990s) and Ireland in 2003. *Phytophthora ramorum* is subject to plant health controls in the EU under Commission Decision 2002/757/EC (& amendments). The organism has been isolated from over 30 plant species worldwide including a number which have significant commercial and amenity value in Ireland, particularly *Rhododendron* and *Viburnum* spp. To date *P. ramorum* has not been detected on tree species in Ireland, however there is strong concern however that Irish trees could become infected. Extensive surveys have been carried out by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food (DAFF) from 2003 to present. Since 2003 over 4000 samples were collected from nurseries, garden centres, public parks and forests around Ireland. *Phytophthora ramorum* was detected in all years [positive samples: 8% (2003), 2% (2004), 19% (2005), 10% (2006) & 16% (2007)]. In 2003, *P. ramorum* was only found on *Rhododendron* and *Viburnum* spp., however by 2007 the presence of *P. ramorum* was confirmed on five plant genera (*Rhododendron*, *Viburnum*, *Camellia*, *Photinia* & *Magnolia*). *Phytophthora ramorum* has also been found on wild *Rhododendron* spp. On going surveys are being carried out by Horticulture and Plant Health Division and the Forest Service of DAFF. Eradication & containment measures are being implemented in accordance with EU legislation.