

Effectiveness of the Sudden Oak Death outreach program: Results of an online survey

Executive Summary

The California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) and University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) implemented an online survey in March 2005. The purpose of the survey was to assess the effectiveness of past Sudden Oak Death education and guide future outreach efforts in California. The survey generated a total of 302 responses from a variety of geographic regions and affiliations. Most responses came from the infested California counties and from the public sector (government or Cooperative Extension / Master Gardener affiliation). The survey results indicate that past outreach efforts have been well received, but there is still a need for more work, especially with supplying handouts and signage in park systems, in addition to providing more information to reduce misdiagnosis. We would like to thank all participants of this survey for their comments and valuable feedback.

Survey results

- 90% of respondents from infested counties indicated a moderate to high level of concern about the disease.
- 38% of respondents in the private sector deal with Sudden Oak Death often compared to 50% of respondents from the public sector who deal with it often. (Note: private sector affiliation included homeowners, arborists/landscapers, nurserymen, and other.)
- 91% of respondents have easy access to information which answers all of their questions.
- 72% of respondents choose the COMTF website as their first information resource.
- Of the 65% of respondents who have attended COMTF training sessions, most consider them either very (64%) or moderately (38%) useful.
- 70% of private sector respondents had attended a training session.
- 70% of private sector respondents plan to attend a training session in the future.
- 87% of private sector respondents said they had incorporated knowledge of *P. ramorum* into their business practices by: (1) including *P. ramorum* knowledge in Timber Harvest Plans; (2) educating staff, clients, and the public on Best Management Practices; and (3) disinfecting tools and equipment after working with infected trees.
- 76% of those that marked themselves as “highly informed about *P. ramorum*” said they had changed their personal practices due to new knowledge.
- A majority of respondents (66%) wanted more outreach efforts, particularly site specific outreach, in their area.

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