



USDA National Clonal Germplasm Repository – Corvallis, Oregon *Xylella fastidiosa* Response Plan

Background

In October, 2015, the presence of the bacterium *Xylella fastidiosa* was confirmed by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) in several pear trees growing in the field germplasm collection at the USDA genebank. Preliminary DNA sequence data suggests it is the isolate *X. fastidiosa* subsp. *multiplex*, which can cause a chronic leaf-scorching disease in many different species of woody landscape shrubs and shade trees. This disease is widely distributed in the southern and eastern United States, where it is also known as ‘Oak Leaf Scorch’ or ‘Almond Leaf Scorch’, however *X. fastidiosa* is not known to be present in the state of Oregon and pear trees have not been reported as a host in North or South America.

Oregon Situation

Oregon was recently declared to be free of *Xylella*, following a state-wide survey by the ODA. This designation allowed nursery stock to be shipped to the European Union from Oregon without individual nursery certification for *Xylella*. As a result of the discovery of *Xylella* in pear trees in Corvallis, the European Union has rescinded Oregon’s state-wide status as a pest free area. Oregon has expanded a state quarantine against moving hosts of *Xylella*.

NCGR Response

The USDA genebank will temporarily suspend distribution of Pyrus scions and cuttings, pending the results of the following actions.

- The ODA and the USDA Agricultural Research Service are collaborating on a survey of pear trees and other potential hosts of *X. fastidiosa* in the Corvallis, Oregon area.
- DNA sequence information is being generated and analyzed by researchers at Washington State University to confirm the subspecies identity of the bacterium.
- The USDA genebank will conduct a trial this winter to determine whether *Xylella* bacteria can survive in scionwood following various storage or therapy treatments.

Once we have more information on the distribution and identity of this *Xylella* isolate, we will be better able to assess the disease risk it may pose to germplasm recipients. We hope to resume distribution of pear propagation material soon.

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