

PHYTOPHTHORA RAMORUM ON JAPANESE LARCH IN SOUTH WALES

Introduction

1. This note is a summary of recent information about the developing situation regarding an outbreak of *Phytophthora ramorum* in south Wales.
2. Please see the sector briefing issued by Forestry Commission Wales (FCW) dated 9/6/2010 for further background at <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pramorom> and the Welsh Assembly Government written statement on *Phytophthora ramorum* issued on 30th June at <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-guide-docs-pub/bus-business-documents/bus-business-documents-written-min-state.htm>.

Latest Position

3. Currently the outbreak has only been found in Welsh Assembly Government woodlands managed by FCW.
4. Approximately 700 hectares of Japanese larch on the Welsh Assembly Government woodland estate are exhibiting *Phytophthora ramorum* symptoms. These sites have an estimated volume of 150,000 cubic metres.
5. The infection has been confirmed by laboratory testing in the lower Afan Valley and Garw Valley in south Wales.
6. FCW has been issued with instructions by the Forestry Commission Plant Health Service under the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005 to fell the infected areas identified as at mid June. Plans for felling, which will have to be completed by 31 March 2011, are now underway.
7. The Food and Environment Research Agency (Fera) is organising helicopter surveys throughout mid Wales during July. In addition FCW is ground surveying all larch stands in south Wales. These surveys are covering public and private sector woodlands and surveyors may be in contact with private landowners to gain access.
8. FCW has started the process of visiting mills in Wales which would be interested in becoming licenced to receive and process infected material in the future.
9. FCW will shortly initiate discussions with trade organisations to agree a trade briefing seminar (likely to be in early September) to develop an appropriate marketing strategy.

Phytophthora ramorum

10. Currently only public woodlands have been confirmed as being infected with *Phytophthora ramorum*, however if it is found in private woodlands, the Forestry Commission (FC) will use its GB wide regulatory powers to compel owners to fell infected trees.

Symptoms

11. Information on *Phytophthora ramorum* symptoms experienced to date is widely available on the Forestry Commission's website <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/WCAS-4Z5JLL>. On Japanese larch, shoots and foliage can be affected and are visible as wilted, withered shoot tips with blackened needles. The infected shoots shed their needles prematurely. Trees with branch dieback may have numerous cankers on their branches and upper trunk that can bleed resin.

What should woodland owners and managers do?

12. Look on the Forestry Commission website www.forestry.gov.uk/pramorom for more information and familiarise yourself with the symptoms and other details.

13. Maintain vigilance and regularly inspect your woods particularly where larch and/or rhododendron are present. Please note that we are primarily concerned with larch in forests and woodland in relation to this change in the disease dynamics.

14. If you suspect your woodland may be infected or suspicious symptoms are present, you should report it to Forestry Commission Wales Grants & Regulations Office at Clawdd Newydd, Ruthin, Denbighshire, LL15 2NL Tel: 0300 068 0300, email: bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

15. The details you will be asked for will include:

- **Name and address;**
- **Contact telephone and email;**
- **Location of the woodland concerned (Grid reference or postcode or nearest town);**
- **Approximate area and age of the Japanese larch;**
- **Approximate area of rhododendron (if present);**
- **Is the rhododendron (if present) showing symptoms;**
- **Approximate date when symptoms were first noticed.**

16. If you are concerned about an individual garden, parkland or amenity tree then you should contact the Forest Research Tree Health Diagnostic Advisory Service on 01420 23000 or visit www.forestresearch.gov.uk/ddas.

Phytophthora ramorum

17. We strongly recommend you implement basic biosecurity measures, especially if you are concerned about infection of your woodlands

<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/phytophthoraprotocol30apr2010.pdf/> .

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