

January 2008 update

Independent molecular confirmation of the Alaska *Phytophthora alni* subspecies *uniformis* (PAU) finding was received from 1) Dr. Susan Diehl, Mississippi State University and 2) Dr. Mary Palm, USDA/APHIS/PPQ/PHP/PSPI, PPQ Molecular Diagnostic Lab.

Morphological confirmation of the Alaskan *P. alni* subsp. *uniformis* cultures was received from Dr. Paul Reeser and Dr. Everett Hansen, Oregon State University. However, slight differences in the morphological descriptions from that of the European PAU have been noted. Discussions are underway with European scientists to discern whether there are possible differences between the Alaskan PAU isolates and those from Europe.

Discussions among USDA Forest Service, APHIS, and State of Alaska Division of Agriculture are underway to assess the significance of this finding. A fact sheet is under development for the State Nursery Conference in late January.

The APHIS NPAG scientists for *P. alni* are analyzing the information related to all the *P. alni* subspecies. An official recommendation is expected to be forwarded to the APHIS PPQ Executive Team in February. Preliminary indications are that it doesn't look like they will be recommending APHIS take specific actions for the *P. alni* subspecies *uniformis* in Alaska. *P. alni* subspecies *alni* in Europe is the one they are most concerned about.

Inclusion of Alaska in the USFS National *Phytophthora alni* risk map is underway with the assistance of FHTET.

Reprocessing of 2007 isolates from the 30 sites is underway at Michigan State University under the direction of Dr. Gerard Adams and through the financial assistance of the USFS Evaluation Monitoring program. All samples are expected to be re-processed and re-evaluated in less than 6 months.

- Traditional isolation of *Phytophthora* spp. by culturing the bait samples and identifying cultures by sequencing yielded an overwhelming number of *Phytophthora gonapodyides* and rarely other species.
- To more effectively determine the presence of *P. alni* subspecies, and rare species such as *P. hybernica* and to more accurately determine their distribution, all the summer 2007 bait samples need to be re-processed.
- Reprocessing will permit targeted searches for the species of interest and avoid the interference of the predominant *P. gonapodyides*. This can be accomplished by extracting total DNA from leaf baits, selectively amplifying *Phytophthora* DNA, and screening for *P. alni* subspecies and other rare species.