

To: Peter Femrite

Re: Oak disease variant looms as new threat

Third strain may be offspring of U.S., European types

A previously unknown strain of the tree-killing disease known as sudden oak death has been found in a nursery in Washington state, a possible mutant child of the fast-spreading pathogen.

Dear Sir,

The finding you report simply illustrates that another strain of the US type has been found. In another paper Professor Hansen from OSU reported finding a further 2 new and unique genotypes trapped from streams in the wilds of Oregon. Should we cut down the forests to prevent the spread of these new types. After all they may eventually find their way into ornamental nurseries where they may well lead to the destruction of many valuable plants. The evidence that the pathogen comes from our own forests is stronger than the idea that they were introduced from elsewhere ..Asia perhaps. As for *Phytophthora kernovii* it is found in a few localized areas in Cornwall. So where is the panic here! There are over 70 species of *Phytophthora* in the world. In California alone there are over 40 species. Many of them are far more destructive than *P. ramorum*. One, *P. cinnamomi*, has over 1000 potential hosts and is one of the most destructive pathogens known.

How do I know because I am a professor of Plant Pathology who has worked with these pathogens for over 35 years. In my opinion the latest statement out of Berkeley is yet another example of the alarmist and misleading rhetoric that has done so

much unnecessary damage to the ornamental industry.

Your paper should attempt to seek the unbiased truth and not be misled by unfounded 'garbage' that has no foundation in scientific fact!

Kind Regards,

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