

What everyone should know about *Phytophthora ramorum*, causal agent for what is commonly called "sudden oak death"

- *P. ramorum* is a new, invasive plant disease that poses a threat to Washington's environment and native plants.
- The disease attacks more than 60 plant species – many common in Washington, such as camellia, Douglas fir, evergreen huckleberry, kalmia, madrone, pieris, rhododendron, and viburnum.
- The disease has not been found in Washington outside of nurseries. WSDA, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, has looked for the disease in the environment and not found it.
- Washington's nursery industry has been very supportive of WSDA's survey and eradication efforts. Washington nurseries are not responsible for the introduction of this disease into the state.
- The disease has been found in many nursery locations throughout the U.S.
- Since June 2003 when the disease was first detected in Washington, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) has put into place the most aggressive nursery survey program in the country in an effort to find and eradicate infected plants. More than 300 nurseries have been inspected, and more than 100,000 plant samples have been processed.
- In March 2004 WSDA required nurseries to notify WSDA of all shipments of trees, shrubs, and woody vines received from out of state and to hold shipments for one business day, to allow WSDA to evaluate the type and source of material received.
- In April 2004 WSDA ordered plants arriving from California to be accompanied by a certificate stating the material was free of SOD.
- The disease was first detected in the U.S. in 1995 in California when mature, healthy oak trees suddenly began dying.
- Tens of thousands of California oak and tanoak trees have been killed by the disease in less than eight years, and other plant species in California have suffered greatly.
- WSDA's goal with regard to *P. ramorum* is: 1) Eradicate the disease from the nurseries where it has been detected. 2) Eliminate further introduction of the disease into the state. 3) Keep the disease out of our landscapes and environment. To reach these goals, WSDA needs consistent funding at adequate levels to: 1) expand laboratory facilities and capability, 2) increase the number and frequency of nursery inspections, 3) continue to hold and inspect plants entering Washington, and 4) establish a SOD-certification program.
- All infected plants found in nurseries and adjacent host plants have been destroyed as mandated in federal regulations.