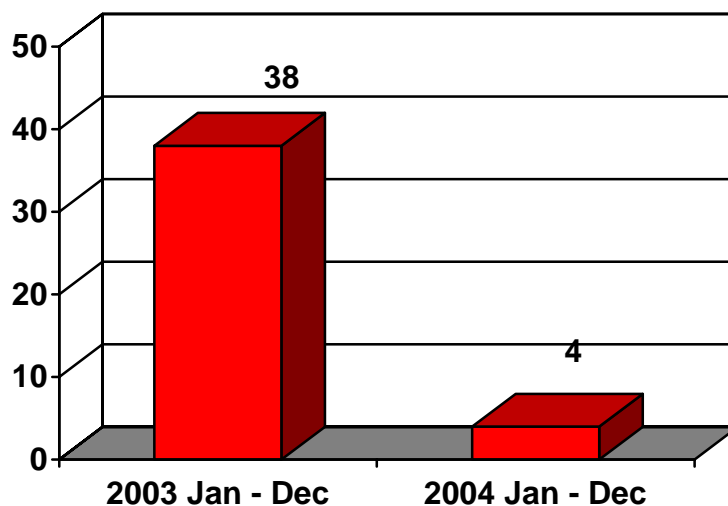


"2004 figures highlight significant progress for Defra's campaign to protect the country from *Phytophthora ramorum*."

Particularly encouraging is the **dramatic fall in the number of positive findings of *P.ramorum* on plant passported material:**

Number of findings on passported material

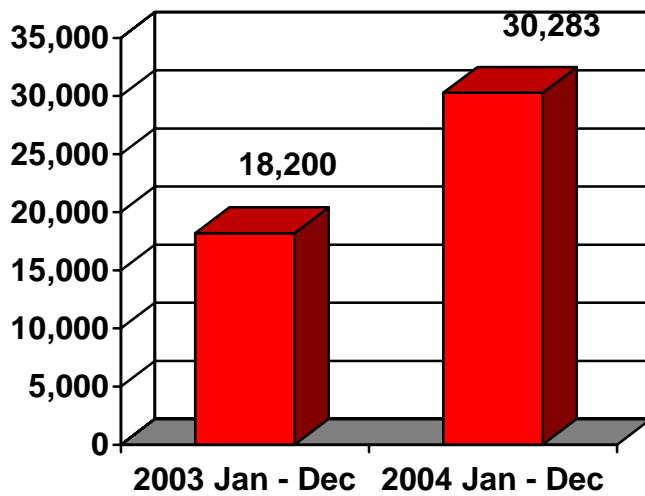


An almost 90% reduction in the incidence of infection on commercial plant material moving within the EU under the passporting scheme indicates that the measures appear to be working.

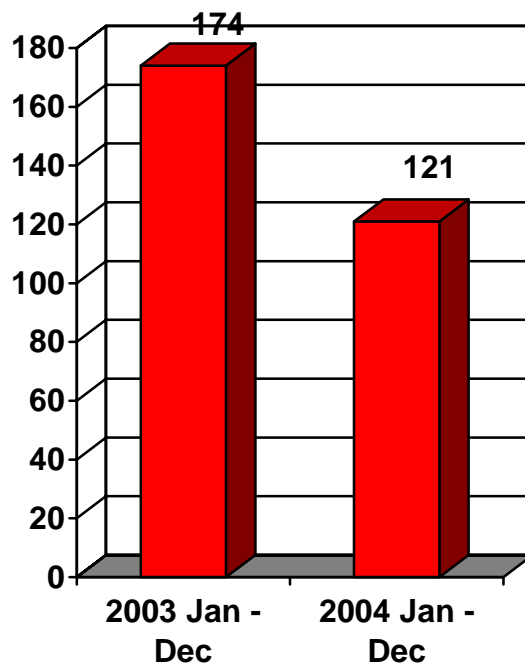
Inspections of *P.ramorum* – susceptible material arriving from Continental Europe at points of entry have so far elicited no confirmed findings of the disease. Two consignments (from 1,048 lorries inspected during the first survey round) were destroyed following failure by carriers to produce correct documentation.

A 30% reduction in the number of new outbreaks identified across England and Wales during 2004 compared to 2003 is also good news, especially as the number of inspections undertaken increased by 66% during the same period. The raising of the Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate's survey quotas has been a key feature of Defra's approach to the containment and eradication of *P.ramorum*.

Number of inspections in England and Wales

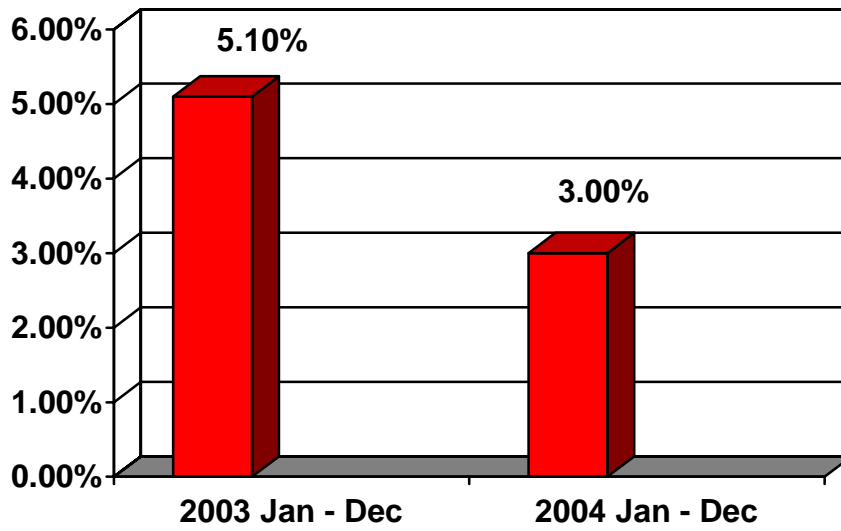


Number of new outbreaks in England and Wales

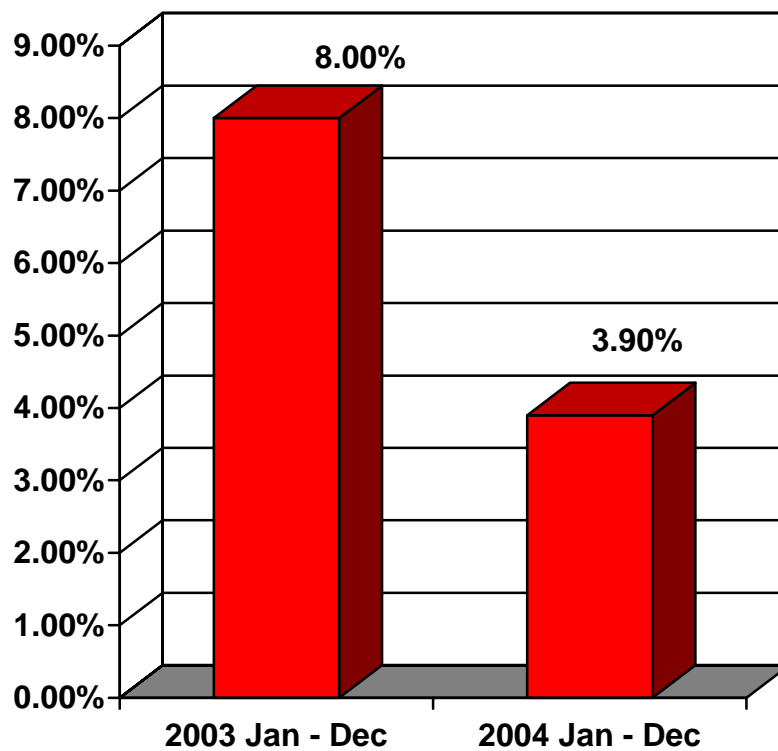


Incidence rates, denoting the percentage of sites found to be infected on inspection, have fallen for both nurseries and retail centres, and managed/unmanaged land:

% sites affected – nurseries and garden centres



% sites affected – managed/unmanaged land



These outcomes are encouraging but specific challenges remain, including repeat findings at certain sites and some difficulties in achieving eradication in parks, gardens and woodlands. (Although monitoring studies at sites where eradication action has been taken have not detected any new plant infections so far.) Such areas require further investigation and action. Moreover, outbreak statistics recently collated for January and February 2005 show increased rates of occurrence against the same period for 2004, further endorsing the need for continued vigilance.

Defra is committed to maintaining a rigorous programme of inspection and enforcement with a view to reducing further the incidence of the disease.