

News Release

SUDDEN OAK DEATH FOUND IN A LOS ANGELES COUNTY NURSERY

Date: March 10, 2004

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Today at the California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) meeting, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced that *Phytophthora ramorum* has been found at Monrovia Nursery, a large Los Angeles County wholesale horticultural nursery. Known to cause Sudden Oak Death, the pathogen was detected on several varieties of Camellia plants as part of a national *P. ramorum* nursery survey, in addition to a trace-back survey from a Washington state nursery found to have the disease. "This is the first time *P. ramorum* has been found in a Southern California nursery. I am very happy that regulatory officials are in cooperation with the nursery industry in addressing this in a timely manner," said Karen Suslow, COMTF Nursery Committee co-chair.

Following the detection of *P. ramorum* at the nursery, all host plants have been placed on hold, and infected plants will be destroyed. Additionally, all host plants within 10 meters of the infected lots will be on hold for 90 days and inspected twice for symptoms of the disease before being released. Host plants beyond the 10 meters will go through an additional inspection before shipment. CDFA is currently conducting trace-back and trace-forward surveys for all host material shipped over the past year in an effort to identify any potentially infected material that may have been shipped unknowingly. Agricultural officials internationally will also be notified about shipments from the nursery that were potentially carrying the disease.

Currently 12 California coastal counties* are regulated for *Phytophthora ramorum* in natural settings. It has killed tens of thousands of oak and tanoak trees in the 12 regulated California counties and is found in more than 40 plant species worldwide. To date, eight California nurseries have been found to have *P. ramorum* infestations, as have nurseries in Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. In Europe, the disease has been found in hundreds of nurseries, and more recently, several isolated natural areas.

For more information, contact Katie Palmieri, Pacific Southwest Research Station and COMTF public information officer, at (510) 847-5482. For general information on Sudden Oak Death or the COMTF, go to the Task Force website at: www.suddenoakdeath.org.