



Better Training for Safer Food *Initiative*

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Contingency planning

Session 13

Generic Contingency Plan

Outlines general arrangements and organisation to deal with an outbreak of any major pest

Pest Specific Contingency Plan

Specific information and guidance on how to deal with a particular major pest

Standard operating procedures

Detailed instructions on how to carry out certain operations e.g. how to take samples

Contingency plans

What are the advantages of having a plan?

What are the risks/disadvantages of not having a plan?

Purpose of pest specific contingency plans

- *Evaluate potential actions in response to an outbreak*
- *Highlight gaps in our preparations for an outbreak*
 - e.g. diagnostic capability or lack of pesticide options pesticide approvals
- *Agree who will do what in an outbreak*
- *Define an agreed policy on action (consult stakeholders for high profile pests)*

Pest Specific Contingency Plan

Provision of Information

- **Disease or Pest**

Biology

- life cycle, symptoms,
detection, damage, control...

How to prevent introduction and
further spread

Ring Rot of Potato

Why is it a concern?

Ring rot is a quarantine disease of potato that is listed in the EC Plant Health Directive as a notifiable disease in the UK. Yield losses are caused by tuber rotting and in individual tubers have been as high as 50%. If it were to become established in the UK, it would have a major impact on our seed-potato industry which would be substantial, especially for exports. If established, the costs of control would also be high. Control of this disease requires vigilance from all sectors of the industry, from growers through to processors, packers and retailers.

What is it?

Ring rot is caused by the bacterium *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*. It is found in parts of North America and is also established in most member states. There have been outbreaks in a number of the countries that will be joining the Community in 2004. There had been no outbreaks in the UK prior to a finding in Wales in November 2003. The disease is favoured by cool climates and could easily establish under UK conditions.



What can you do?

Plant only classified seed

All classified seed potatoes produced in the EC must have been derived from material found free from these diseases. Source seed with extreme care.

Control groundkeepers

Potato groundkeepers are a key factor in the long-term survival of the disease. Their control removes an important source of disease inoculum.

Practise good hygiene

Regularly clean and disinfect all machinery, equipment, containers, vehicles and storage facilities used during potato production.

Don't spread disease with waste

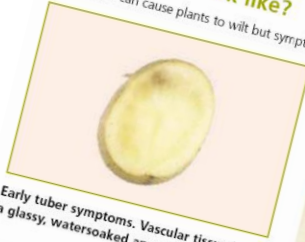
Discarded potatoes and potato processing waste could harbour the disease. Dispose of all potato processing waste in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Management of Agricultural and Horticultural Waste (PB 3580).

Keep a good look out

If you see any of the symptoms described above you must immediately contact your local Defra Plant Health Inspector or the PHSI HQ, York
Tel: 01904 45517

What does it look like?

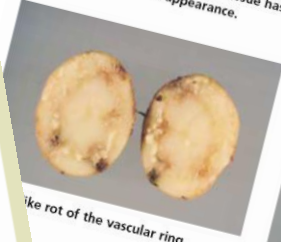
The disease can cause plants to wilt but symptoms are much more likely to be observed in tubers.



Early tuber symptoms. Vascular tissue has a glassy, watersoaked appearance.



Close up of bacterial ooze emerging from the vascular ring of an infected tuber.



Ring rot of the vascular ring.



Later stage of infection. Extensive tuber rot and breakdown with internal hollowing.



What is being done to help?

Legislation

Under the terms of the EC Plant Health Directive and the Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993, importation of material carrying this disease is prohibited. In addition, a specific control directive (93/85/EEC) for the disease lays down measures aimed at preventing its spread wherever it is found and, if possible, eradicating it.

Survey

Defra Plant Health and Seeds Inspectors (PHSIs) and SEERAD Inspectors carry out an annual survey of seed and ware potato stocks, including those grown from both UK and non-UK seed. Samples are tested for latent infection by the disease at the Central Science Laboratory (for England and Wales) and the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency (for Scotland).

Import inspections

Consignments of imported ware potatoes are inspected by the PHSI. Samples are taken for testing at the Central Science Laboratory for the disease.

Ring Rot / Brown Rot

You should be aware of two serious bacterial diseases of potato. They are not established in the UK and are a threat to our potato industry.

Ring Rot

The initial symptom is a glassiness and darkening of the vascular ring which develops into a cheesy rot with separation and eventual necrosis of the tissue.



Symptoms of potato ring rot caused by *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*

Brown Rot

The initial symptom is a brown staining of the vascular ring which later rots completely. A creamy-white ooze exudes from cut vascular tissues and eyes of the potato.



Symptoms of potato brown rot caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum*

Please note! Potato waste can transmit these diseases. Don't dump it on arable land.

These diseases are difficult to tell apart. If you see any of the above symptoms or suspect either disease, you must immediately contact your local Defra Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or in Scotland, your local SEERAD Area Office.



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

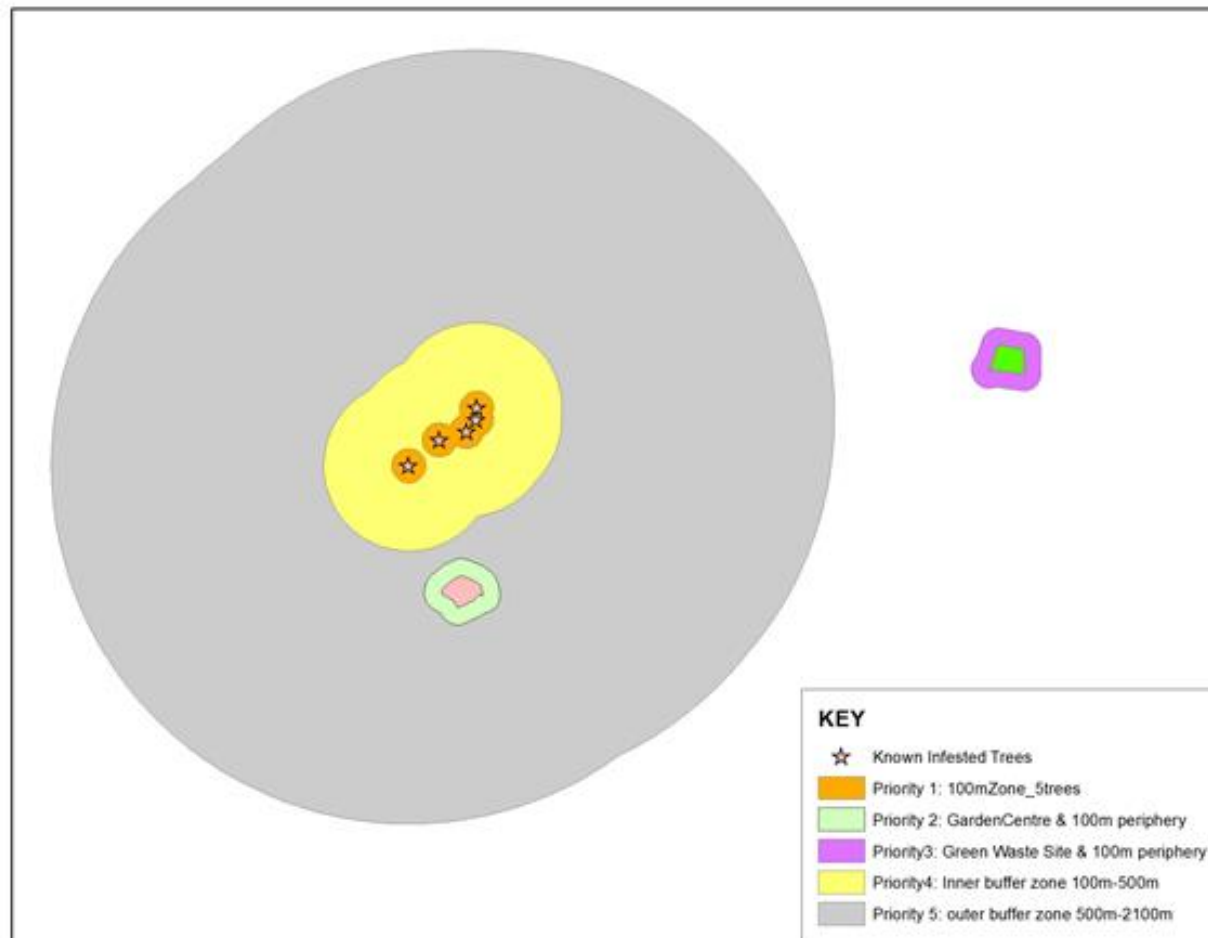
Essential elements of a plan (EPPO PM 9/10)

- Initiation of plan – official action following a presumptive diagnosis
- Confirmation – official action to eradicate (possibly just containment?)
- Review of measures if prolonged outbreak
- Determination of completion of statutory action
- Command structure
- Stakeholder consultation
- Internal communication and documentation
- External communication
- Testing of plan and training of staff
- Evaluation of plan after outbreak and revision

Structure of pest specific contingency plans in UK

- Introduction and scope
- Anticipation of threat
- Activities to be undertaken to prepare for outbreaks
- Response to suspect outbreaks
- Response to confirmed outbreaks
- Recovery activities
- References
- Optional factsheet on pest in Appendix

Map showing layout of different survey areas for a hypothetical *Anoplophora* outbreak



Shape of draft generic contingency plan

Anticipate

Assess

Prepare

Respond

Recover



Anticipate & Assess

Policy

Pest Risk Analysis

***Pest Specific
Contingency Plans***



Preparation

Resources

Training

Exercises

Evaluation



Response

- *Initial investigation*
- *Decide Alert status*
 - how serious is the outbreak?
- *Command structure & management*
- *Roles and responsibilities*

Alert status in UK

ALERT	STATUS	COMMAND LEVEL
White	Plant pest/disease with potential for limited geographical spread	Instigation of Incident management plan involving Operational command at appropriate level and follow Standard Operating Procedures or scientific advice where applicable
Black	Significant plant pest/disease with potential for limited geographical spread	Instigation of Incident management plan usually involving joint Tactical and Operational command at appropriate level and follow plant pest/disease specific response plans where applicable
Amber	Serious plant pest/disease with potential for relatively slow but extensive spread leading to host death and/or major economic or environmental impacts	Instigation of Incident management plan usually involving joint Strategic and Tactical command and follow plant pest/disease specific response plans where applicable
Red	Serious or Catastrophic plant pest/disease with potential for rapid and extensive geographical spread leading to host death and/or major economic, food security or environmental impacts	Instigation of Incident management plan involving Strategic, Tactical and Operational command and follow plant pest/disease specific response plans where applicable

UK Escalation procedure

- *If a Response Officer (inspector) suspects a serious 'quarantine' pest they should immediately contact the person responsible for eradication and containment.*
- *Manager will determine the **preliminary** alert status.*
- *If Black, Amber or Red the manager will inform the CPHO (head of NPPO)*
- *The CPHO may convene a Contingency Core Group, by teleconference where necessary, to decide on the alert status.*

Contingency Core Group (UK)

- meeting is chaired by CPHO (Head of NPPO) and follows a standard agenda.
- an 'ad hoc' group put together quickly and composed of inspectors, policy, scientists, etc.
- assesses the report of outbreak using the risk criteria table
- If the alert status is confirmed as either Black, Amber or Red then the CCG will nominate the Control Authority, decide on command level and indicate the scale of response required.

Possible weaknesses in outbreak management

- Too many people reporting to one person
- Different organisations involved and poor communication between them
- Lack of reliable up to date incident information
- Unclear lines of authority and responsibility
- Unclear or unspecified outbreak objectives
- Poor recording of decisions and justification for making them

Management by Outbreak Management Team

'Everyone working towards one aim with clear objectives of how to achieve it'

- Incident Commander (with OMT) determines the desired outcome of the outbreak.
- These outbreak objectives are then communicated to everyone involved (needs adequate resources)
- At any one time only one set of objectives and only one Outbreak Action Plan
- Accurate and timely reports are produced of current outbreak situation and key decisions taken
- Control communication –providing information to media, affected stakeholders etc.

Underpinning concepts

- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities – for all people appointed to a role
- Defined information flows – clear reporting lines within the management structure
- Common Operating Picture – a description of the shared and consistent understanding the situation from Outbreak Management Team

Summary

- *A generic contingency plan outlines the principles on how an NPPO will respond to outbreaks*
- *Incident Management Systems can be used to structure the management of outbreaks*
- *Pest specific contingency plans outline the actions planned for specific pests*
- *Contingency plans are likely to be a requirement of the new EU plant health regime*