

Pest Alert: *Pseudomonas avellanae* (Stem dieback of hazelnut)



Fig 1. Early canker on hazel stem. Fig 2. Vascular staining on hazel stem. Fig 3. Mature canker on hazel stem with proliferation of sucker growth. Fig 4. Hazel showing stem dieback Fig 5. Infected hazel amongst non-infected hosts. All images courtesy of Dr. Marco Scortichini

- *Pseudomonas avellanae* is a bacterial pathogen of **hazel (*Corylus avellana*)** present in Greece and Italy but **absent from the UK**.
- The bacterium enters new hosts through scars in early autumn, but symptoms become apparent in hosts in the following spring. Early symptoms include **wilts** and **dieback of twigs**. **Branch cankers with associated bacterial oozing** develop later leading to **branch diebacks** and **plant death**.
- *Pseudomonas avellanae* **spreads from infected hosts by wind and rain** and disease may be made worse by **spring frosts** which provide further wounds for the bacteria to colonise.
- The host of *P. avellanae* is **hazel**, a native plant species with considerable environmental importance. The pathogen is likely to be a pest of hazel growing in **woodlands, commercial hazelnut orchards** and **hedges**.
- The pathogen is limited to specific areas in **Greece** and **Italy** with highly acidic soils and areas of the UK with **highly acidic soils** may be at greater risk.
- The most likely pathway for this pathogen to enter the UK is on **imported nursery trees** and **hedging** from **Europe**.

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For finds at garden centres, plant nurseries or private gardens in England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

Tel: 0300 1000 313 (please select option 3 when calling)

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

For Scotland, contact the Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit:

Email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

Web: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth>

For Northern Ireland, contact DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>

For finds in the wider environment:

<https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/>