

Pest Alert: Olive trees, risk to trade from *Xylella fastidiosa*



Fig 1. Symptoms of *Xylella fastidiosa* on olive trees: brown necrotic lesions
Photo: Ed Birchall, APHA UK



Fig 2. Symptoms of *Xylella fastidiosa* on olive trees: brown necrotic lesions
Photo: Andrew Gaunt, APHA UK

- *Xylella fastidiosa* is an extremely damaging **bacterial disease**, with a large range of hosts. It is **not** currently present in the UK.
- **Olive trees** (*Olea*) are amongst the worst affected hosts, with devastating effects on infected orchards in Italy. Symptoms on olive trees include **leaf scorch**, **dieback** and eventually **tree death**.
- There is evidence **that infected olive trees have been moving in trade** – with findings being confirmed in numerous European countries.
- Olive trees are very susceptible, but infection can remain **latent** and symptoms not show for several years.
- Due to the risk posed, there are statutory notification requirements for certain imports; check with your relevant plant health authority.
- Consider carefully your sourcing of *Xylella* host plants, particularly from countries where it is known to be present: France, Italy and Spain.

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/>

If you have serious concerns that your plants are infected with *Xylella* then please contact your relevant plant health officials

For further information:

Defra plant health portal high profile pests and diseases:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/high-profile-pests-and-diseases/xylella/>