helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

20 March 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) on Apple dimple fruit viroid (ADFVd)

I am writing to seek your views on a UK Pest Risk Analysis for Apple dimple fruit viroid. A link to the rapid PRA can be found at the website given below:

https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/pest-risk-analyses/

We would welcome your views and comments on the PRA and the proposals for future action.

In submitting any comments you may wish to focus on the summary, key uncertainties and conclusion sections of the risk assessments and to consider the following:

- Are any factual corrections required?
- Your view on the appropriateness of the suggested proposals for future actions?
- Can you provide any additional information (or links to other sources of information) that may help address uncertainty identified in the assessment/management measures?
- Are there any risks that have not been adequately considered?
- Have you reviewed the risk assessment and consider that you have nothing further to add?

This review applies to the UK and is being conducted by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, with the agreement of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Government. The objective of this consultation is to gather views from all interested sectors on the UK position to progress. We will take all comments made into account in developing the UK position.

Background

ADFVd was first identified in 1996 in Iran and has subsequently been identified in a further 4 countries: Japan, China, Lebanon and Italy. Infection of the viroid can cause the fruit of some *Malus sp.* to become unmarketable. Symptoms appear on the fruit, which can look like shrivelled fruit with characteristic pitted spots and discoloration on the skin, there are no other symptoms being reported on other parts of the tree, with effects on yield being currently unknown. As the symptoms are very noticeable combined with the absence of any known vectors in the UK it is thought the spread of the viroid would be slow and that an outbreak would be detected rapidly with opportunities for containment and eradication. However, rapid detection could be confounded by some apple cultivars that are known to remain asymptomatic. A statutory approach could be pursued, with import requirements for host material and obligatory action against outbreaks, with an alternative option of minimising the risk of the industry using infected propagating/planting material, through certification arrangements.

Recommendations for action

The UK Plant Health Risk Group (PHRG) review is presenting the following option for future action against ADFVd:

- Inclusion of ADFVd into the Fruit Propagation Certification Scheme (FPCS), with a DNA-based test to determine the presence of the viroid. All responses should be sent to plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk

Responses should be received by **17th May 2019.**

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be made available to the public on request, in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental information Regulations 2004 (EIRs)

If you do not wish your response, including your name, contact details and any other personal information, to be publically available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note that if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, this will not count as a confidentiality request. Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for the information under freedom of information legislation. However, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

Yours faithfully

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