

Recommendation of the Working Group on the Annexes of the Council Directive 2000/29/EC – Section II – Listing of Harmful Organisms as regards the future listing of *Eutetranychus orientalis* Klein¹

Current regulatory status

Eutetranychus orientalis is regulated in Annex II, Part A, Section II of Council Directive 2000/29/EC as organism not known to occur in the Union territory. Introduction and spread within the Union shall be banned if it is found to be present on plants of *Citrus* L., *Fortunella* Swingle, *Poncirus* Raf., and their hybrids other than fruit and seeds.

Import prohibition is in place for plants of *Citrus* L., *Fortunella* Swingle, *Poncirus* Raf., and their hybrids (III A16), while introduction and movement into and within the EU is regulated under Annex IV (AII 17) for plants of *Citrus* L., *Fortunella* Swingle, *Poncirus* Raf., and their hybrids, other than fruit and seeds.

Identity of the pest

The identity is clearly defined. Females are broadly oval and flattened with an average size of 410×280µm. The adult female varies in colour from green to orange or brown with darker spots. Males are smaller than the females with a triangular posterior end, with legs, approximately 1.5 times their body length. However, any reliable identification needs examination of specimens under a microscope. *E. orientalis* has distinct characteristics and could be distinguished using hand lens. However, distinguish from other *Eutetranychus* species is not straightforward even by examination of specimens under a microscope.

Mites start feeding on the upper side of the leaf along the midrib and then spread to lateral veins, resulting in the development of pale yellow streaks that give the leaf a chlorotic appearance. Necrotic spots occur in advanced stages of leaf damage. Heavily infested leaves weaken and drop, leading to dieback of twigs and branches. On citrus, the pest concentrates around oil glands on leaves and fruits, and sucks the sap, causing the development of white spots that turn the surface of leaves and fruits pale green.

E. orientalis is the most polyphagous species of the genus, as it has been reported from 213 plant species in 60 different families. *E. orientalis* is regarded as a pest on *Citrus* sp., but has also been found on other crops including almonds (*Prunus amygdalus*), avocado (*Persea americana*), bananas (*Musa paradisiaca*), cassava (*Manihot esculenta*), castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis*), cotton (*Gossypium* spp.), date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), figs (*Ficus carica*), grapevine (*Vitis vinifera*), guavas (*Psidium guajava*), maize (*Zea mays*), mulberries (*Morus* spp.), olives (*Olea europaea*), pawpaws (*Carica papaya*), peaches (*Prunus persica*), pears (*Pyrus communis*), plums (*Prunus domestica*), quinces (*Cydonia oblonga*), sunflowers (*Helianthus*

¹ Scientific basis for the recommendation: EFSA PLH Panel (EFSA Panel on Plant Health), 2013. Scientific Opinion on the risk to plant health posed by *Eutetranychus orientalis* Klein in the EU territory, with the identification and evaluation of risk reduction options. EFSA Journal 2013;11(7):3317, 81 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3317 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2013.3317/epdf>

annuus), squash (*Curcubita moshata*), sweet potatoes (*Ipomoea batatas*) and watermelons (*Citrullus lanatus*).

Distribution of the pest

E. orientalis is currently present in Cyprus, Greece and Spain.

Potential for establishment and spread in the PRA area

Based on its physiological characteristics and climatic conditions, it can establish in outdoor conditions in southern Europe in warm areas and, in indoor conditions, in the rest of Europe. It is very likely to be associated with plants for planting as it occurs in warm areas and it can develop throughout the year. Eggs are laid on leaves and sometimes on cut flowers and fruits.

Potential for consequences in the PRA area

In areas where the pest has been present or has been introduced, no significant damage has been reported. In addition, no records in protected cultivation have been reported. It seems like that it is an open field pest that is mainly under natural control in its area of origin and in the introduced areas in Europe.

Recommendation

The removal of *E. orientalis* from Annex IIAII would not affect its probability of entry, because import of some regulated host plants (*Citrus*, *Fortunella*, *Poncirus* species and their hybrids) is prohibited in Annex III, although its spreading within the Union could still occur. However, since the regulated *Rutaceae* species constitute an extremely small proportion of the potential host plants of *E. orientalis*, the current phytosanitary measures are mostly ineffective in preventing further introduction and spread of *E. orientalis* in the EU.

Surveillance at the production site and treatment of the consignment as the most effective and technically feasible risk reduction options, particularly when applied together.

Because of the limited impact on the regulated host plants, the WG proposes de-regulation of this pest.