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17 March 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

## Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) on *Elasmopalpus lignosellus*

I am writing to seek your views on a UK Pest Risk Analysis for *Elasmopalpus lignosellus*. 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

*Elasmopalpus lignosellus* (the lesser cornstalk borer) is a polyphagous pest in the Americas, and was intercepted in asparagus from Peru by the UK for the first time in 2019. The pest was initially identified as a potential risk to a number of UK hosts, and action was taken against findings, but there were significant uncertainties surrounding the climatic suitability of the UK which initiated the PRA.

The PRA concludes that if the pest was able to establish in the UK, it would be limited to one generation per year. Two to four generations per year are cited in the literature, so it is unclear if this pest is suited to a univoltine (one generation per year) lifecycle. If this pest was able to establish, the relatively low summer temperatures and high rainfall experienced by the UK would keep individual numbers low, and hence impacts are considered to be 'very small'.

## Recommendations for action

The UK Plant Health Risk Group (PHRG) review is presenting the following option regarding future action against this pest:

- **No statutory action.** The UK PRA concludes that it is still unclear if this pest could establish in the UK, but the risk was considered unlikely (with low confidence). It is, however, considered that this pest would not have a significant impact were it to establish.

All responses should be sent to [plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk](mailto:plantpestsrisks@defra.gov.uk)

Responses should be received by **9<sup>th</sup> June 2021**.

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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