

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

5th April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

Rapid Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) on *Tomato Mottle Mosaic Virus (ToMMV)*

I am writing to seek your views on a UK Pest Risk Analysis for *Tomato mottle mosaic virus*. 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. We will take all comments made into account in developing the UK position.

Background

Tomato mottle mosaic virus (ToMMV) is a tobamovirus that is known to infect solanaceous crops (mainly tomato, peppers, and aubergine). It was first described in tomato crops from Mexico in 2013. Since then, it has been reported from tomato crops in an increasing number of countries around the world, and first reported from the EU in 2015. Currently there have been no reports of damage or symptoms in commercial tomato fruit production. However, there are a couple of disease reports of tomatoes exhibiting ToMMV symptoms at specific production sites in Israel and Mauritius.

This PRA was initiated to gather more information, help reduce uncertainty for this pest and gather evidence on the potential risks to the UK should this pest arrive.

Recommendations for action

It is the conclusion of this PRA that statutory action is not appropriate for ToMMV. The addition of the *Tm2²* gene that conveys resistance to ToMV in current commercially available tomato varieties is also very effective against ToMMV. Officially described in 2013, ToMMV has also been found to be present in historical Dutch tomato seed collections as well as being misidentified as ToMV in Brazil, Iran, and China in the past. In this time no major outbreaks have been reported, with no evidence of significant economic impacts being found (although the uncertainty around misidentifications as ToMV means it is likely unreported from some areas). The evidence of impacts from Mauritius are thought to have been the result of exceptional circumstances (the unusually hot summer caused the heat sensitive resistance gene to breakdown and allowed for symptom expression). If ToMMV was as damaging as ToBFRV (to which it is often compared) we would expect to have seen more reports of outbreaks and higher impacts than have currently been reported and seen globally.

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

- **No Statutory action**

All responses should be sent to plantpestrisks@defra.gov.uk

Responses should be received by **28th June 2023.**

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 publicly 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

Richard McIntosh
Assistant Chief Plant Health Officer
Defra
T: +44 (0)208 026 2396
M: +44 (0)7767 357817
richard.mcintosh@defra.gov.uk