



Scotland's Centre of Expertise



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Plant Health Centre
18 Month
Review



A Summary from the Centre's Director

The Centre Directorate and I are delighted to have overseen the establishment of the Plant Health Centre of Expertise and feel confident that just 18 months in we are already making a difference to protecting Scotland's rural economy and natural environment from plant health threats.

We have focussed on bringing together experts and stakeholders from across the plant health sectors (Forestry, Environment, Horticulture and Agriculture) as a key part of our strategy, reflecting the multi-sectoral, multi-organisational make up of our team. Our Centre launch event in 2018 brought together 60 stakeholders from government, public bodies, industry and academia. This year's new jointly-led Centre-government-stakeholder event – Scotland's Plant Health Conference - attracted double that number, reflecting the growing importance and our collective will to manage plant health in Scotland. We are grateful to both Mairi Gougeon (Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Environment) and Gerry Saddler (Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland) for their participation at this and other events and for their ongoing support.

During this period, we have commissioned 16 projects across a range of topics, helping government and other stakeholders to fill important plant health evidence gaps. For example, we have delivered three projects on the bacterial pathogen *Xylella fastidiosa* and developed and launched a web-based resource

for those working with the natural environment. In commissioning these and other projects, we have brought together teams of experts to meet with stakeholders and help promote Scotland-wide initiatives and debate. Since our launch, our Sector Leads have been tirelessly promoting the work of the Centre, engaging with stakeholders and attending over 50 events in their capacity as Scotland's plant health champions.

Next year is the International Year of Plant Health and we will have a wonderful opportunity to promote Scotland's efforts around plant health, both nationally and internationally, teaming up with Scottish government and others to coordinate activities. Various events and exhibitions are planned throughout the country, and we hope to see as many people as possible coming to learn about and help promote plant health in Scotland.

Finally, a thank you to all those in the Plant Health Centre, those who have been so willing to interact with us to make the Centre a success, and our funders for appreciating the potential that a Centre such as this can offer the people of Scotland. We look forward to working with you all in the coming months and years.

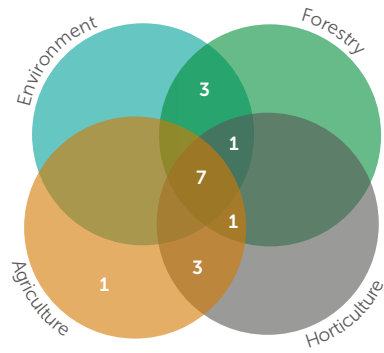


Professor Ian Toth
Centre Director




The Plant Health Centre Directorate at Potatoes in Practice (Balruddery Research Farm, James Hutton Institute) August 2019. From left to right: Damian Bienkowski (Facilitator), Fiona Burnett (Sector Lead – Agriculture), Sonia Humphris (Manager), Chris Quine (Sector Lead – Forestry), Mairi Gougeon (Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Environment), Ian Toth (Director), Gerry Saddler (Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland) and Pete Hollingsworth (Sector Lead – Environment and Horticulture).

Our 16 commissioned projects are bringing sectors together




Vital Statistics

 **10**
Organisations in PHC

 **82**
Events and media articles

 **610**
Twitter followers

 50.7% ♂ 49.3% ♀
PHC and project partners

 **54**
Non-PHC project partners

 **3807**
Website users

 **410**
Years of scientific experience

 **509**
Natural Environment Resource visits

Timeline of our Year

2018

February

Launch of the Plant Health Centre

March

Twitter account live

April

1st call down projects

May

PHC launch event
PHC website live

June

Beechgrove Garden appearance
Royal Highland Show

July

1st publication

September

1st commissioned project

November

Completed expert database

2019

January

1st capacity-building workshop

May

Scotland's Plant Health Centre Conference
Natural environment web resource

August

PHC Pest Reviews published

Highlighted Commissioned Research Projects

Specific threats

Potato cyst nematode

Protecting the future of the Scottish potato industry from the long-term impacts of PCN on seed potato land

Zebra chip

Identifying the location of vectors for *Liberibacter solanacearum* – the causal agent of zebra chip disease of potato

Xylella fastidiosa

Strengthening contingency plans and preparedness against the threat from *Xylella fastidiosa*

Spread, survival and control

Pest vector identification workshops

Upskilling plant health professionals in Scotland through training and exchange of knowledge

Pesticide withdrawals

Future-proofing Scotland's pest and disease control through a thorough understanding of the potential impacts from pesticide withdrawals

Impacts of climate change

Predicting the impacts of climate change on current and future plant health threats through the development of forecasting tools

Supporting Scotland's aims and challenges

Removal of the molluscicide Metaldehyde

Providing timely advice to Scottish Government on the potential impacts of specific chemical control methods

Scottish biodiversity strategy

Supporting Scotland's policy priorities including the integration of plant health planning into the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy

Environmental web resource

Developing a web resource for the environment sector to signpost the most recent and reliable information and provide general recommendations for disease prevention and control

Enabling, networking, cross sector working

Communication network analysis

Improving communication between academics, government and stakeholders through a clearer understanding of where Scottish stakeholders get their plant health information

Sharing solutions between sectors

Defining common approaches and solutions for tackling pests and diseases to improve cross-sector dialogue and potential control options

PHC Pest Reviews

Delivering to stakeholders the latest status, knowledge gaps, PHC perspectives, priorities and recommendations on current plant health threats

Xylella fastidiosa

Status

- **Endemic** across California (vineyard, olive, citrus, mulberry and grape) which are being introduced by nursery stock.
- **UK risk** for ornamentals includes 100 species many of which are widely grown in Scotland.
- **Current evidence** shows no evidence of establishment in Scotland. The only sighting of *X. fastidiosa* in Scotland was in 2014 on a rose bush in Perth.
- **Importation and spread** of *X. fastidiosa* is likely to occur through the nursery trade, particularly in the UK, where it is widely grown in Scotland.
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Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) species - *Globodera pallida*

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Phytophthora ramorum

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Larger Eight toothed spruce bark beetle (*Ips tyographus*)

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Newsletters

Keeping our stakeholders up to date with the latest from the Plant Health Centre

CONTACT US

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AUGUST 2019
Issue 4

PHC News

CATCHING UP ON THE LATEST FROM THE PLANT HEALTH CENTRE

Welcome to the August 2019 issue of the Plant Health Centre's newsletter. In this issue we review some of the 14 projects we have funded in our first year, including a new web resource for plant diseases in the natural environment, (page 2), the distribution and identification of poplifer vectors for the potato zebra chip pathogen in Scotland (page 3), improvements to our national surveillance monitoring for *Xylella fastidiosa* (page 4 and 5) and where people in Scotland get their plant health information (page 6).

Thanks to all those who attended Scotland's Plant Health Conference held on 28th May 2019 in Edinburgh. This conference amalgamated two previous meetings: the Scottish Government's Plant Health Forum and the Plant Health Centre's yearly stakeholder meeting. The 125 conference attendees were welcomed by Prof Gerry Saldier (Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland) before the conference was officially opened by Mairi Gougeon (Minister for Rural Affairs and Natural Environment – see page 2).

Download the presentations and posters here:
www.planthealthcentre.scot.nhs.uk/events/scotland-plant-health-conference

Image below: Brunis Birch Borer (see Watching Brief on page 3). Credit: Karl Hilbig.



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Scotland's Plant Health Conference

Commissioned projects

- New web resource for plant diseases in the natural environment
- Zebra chip and its vectors
- New web resource for *Xylella*
- Networking: Where do people in Scotland get their plant health information?

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- PHC Pest Reviews
- Watching Brief: Brunis Birch Borer
- Knowledge Exchange
- Watching Brief: Oak Processionary Moth
- Consulting with and sub-consulting agencies
- Website and Twitter
- Contact us

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Strengthening Scotland's contingency plans for *Aglyptinus*

Welsh survey of *Aglyptinus*

Government

House of Lords: Plant Health post

Chief Scientist for Climate Change

Barley post and disease risks

International year of Plant Health 2019

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Report to the Centre
- *Aglyptinus*: Gutierrezia protein tests
- Status to share?
- Website and Twitter
- Contact us

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The Plant Health Centre launch event

A threat from *Aglyptinus* (continued): Outcome of the launch event

Communications

"This is not a plant health assessment"

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Distribution of reports
- UK and European network
- Status to share?
- Website and Twitter
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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL

