

Scotland's Plant Health Conference 2026

Confirmed speakers

We are busy behind the scenes organising SPHC 2026 to bring you an exciting programme of talks, posters and interactive activities. This years conference takes place at the Apex City Quay Hotel in Dundee on the 6th October.

Our tickets are sold out and there are plenty of people on our waitlist so if you have a ticket and are no longer able to attend please cancel your ticket so that we can offer the place to other colleagues. You can do this through the confirmation email from Eventbrite you received when you signed up.

Morning - Session 1



David Kenyon, SASA

David, Chief Plant Health Officer for Scotland and Head of SASA, will open Scotland's Plant Health Conference 2026

Ian Toth, James Hutton Institute

As Director of Scotland's Plant Health Centre, Ian will provide an update on centre activities and reflect on the achievements of its second programme as it enters its final year





Julie Pattemore, SASA

Currently based in Scotland, Julie draws on her experience with the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to share insights into biosecurity from an Australian perspective

Laura Meagher, Technology Development Group

Laura has been working with Scotland's Plant Health Centre to evaluate the impacts generated by the centre. Alongside Mariella Marzano, Laura will lead an interactive workshop exploring impact assessment and evaluation



Lunch

Afternoon - Session 2



David Knott, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh

David, Director of Horticulture at RBGE has more than four decades of horticultural experience and will share his perspective of managing botanic garden collections over the years

Helen Pennington, APHA

Helen will introduce a new National Centre for Environmental Horticulture and Plant Health (NCEH), a joint initiative between the Royal Horticultural Society and the Animal and Plant Health Agency



Plant Health Centre Quickfire Projects

5-minute presentations linked to poster session on:

- Endophyte plant protection product regulation jurisdiction: building consensus
- Whole of Scotland LiDAR: analysing the opportunities for plant health benefits and barriers to exploitation
- Evidence-based impacts of severe weather events on forestry pests in Scotland: a meta-analysis
- Understanding the risk to Scotland's plant health arising from wireworm (click beetles) and the monitoring and Integrated Pest Management requirements
- The risk of firewood as a dispersal pathway for invasive forestry pests
- Enhancing knowledge on Potato Leaf Roll Virus (PLRV) to increase stakeholder awareness and support management solutions
- Developing Pest and Disease Risk Assessment Framework a case study of Scotland's Soft Fruit Sector



Poster Session with Tea and Coffee

Afternoon - Session 3



Lorena Rangel, James Hutton Institute

Lorena, a Plant Pathologist at the James Hutton Institute, and Alasdair Allan Commercial Director at from Grampian Growers will present their PHC-funded project RotStop: Preserving the Beauty and Business of Scottish Bulbs, and discuss its role in protecting Scotland's bulb industry while supporting sustainable production

James Nott, Scottish Forestry

As Head of Tree Health at Scottish Forestry, James will explore resilience from a tree health perspective and discuss the lessons that can be learned from other countries to help inform future planning



Scottish Government Riaghaltas na h-Alba

The Plant Health Centre is a virtual centre of expertise funded by Scottish Government through RESAS (Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division) to help tackle plant health challenges for Scotland



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