

SUBJECT: Federal Order for *Phytophthora alni*

TO: STATE AND TERRITORY AGRICULTURAL REGULATORY OFFICIALS

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is issuing a Federal Order (attached) to prohibit the importation from all countries of *Alnus* spp. plants for planting (excluding seed) because they are hosts of *Phytophthora alni* Brasier & S.A. Kirk 2004. To prevent the introduction and dissemination of this harmful plant pathogen into the United States, this Federal Order will be implemented beginning July 6, 2009.

Recent scientific literature identified *P. alni* as a destructive plant pathogen that seriously affects and leads to the death of plants in its host genus, *Alnus* Mill. *P. alni* is rapidly spreading through Europe in riparian environments and possibly through the movement of plants for planting.

Certain pathogenic strains of *P. alni* are not known to occur in the United States, and the pathogen is not known to be seed-transmitted. Plant pathogens, including viruses and viroids, are extremely difficult to detect during a port of entry inspection of the host plants, particularly in the absence of symptoms.

In order to prevent the entry of *P. alni*, APHIS has determined that it is necessary to prohibit the importation of *Alnus* spp. plants for planting, with the exception of seed, until a pest risk analysis has been completed and appropriate effective mitigation measures have been established.

Federal Order:

Phytophthora alni:

Causal organism of alder (*Alnus* spp.) decline

June 22, 2009

The purpose and goal of this Federal Order is to prevent the introduction and dissemination of the harmful plant pest *Phytophthora alni*, the causal organism of alder decline, from all foreign countries into the United States. Certain pathogenic strains of *P. alni* are not known to occur in the United States. This Federal Order is issued pursuant to Section 412(a) of the Plant Protection Act of June 20, 2000, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 7712(a), which authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit or restrict the importation or entry of any plant, plant part, noxious weed or article if the Secretary determines that the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the entry of a plant pest or noxious weed into the United States.

This action is necessary because the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has determined that the introduction and establishment of *P. alni* poses a serious plant pest threat to the agriculture and environment of the United States. The host genus *Alnus* Mill. grows throughout the United States primarily in riparian environments. The decline of alder populations in riparian areas would lead to increased waterway erosion, siltation, disruption of native plant and animal communities and other harmful plant pest and environmental impacts.

P. alni is rapidly spreading through Europe and may have already spread to other countries in exported *Alnus* spp. plants for planting. Over the past three years, *Alnus* spp. plants for planting have been imported into the United States only from Europe; there have been no commercial importations from other parts of the world. Mitigations may be available to prevent the introduction of this pathogen on plants for planting although at this time APHIS has not determined them. The distribution of this pest and the identification of effective risk management measures will be determined through the pest risk analysis process based on future import requests from our trading partners.

In order to prevent the entry of *Phytophthora alni*, the APHIS Administrator has determined that it is necessary to prohibit the importation of *Alnus* spp. plants for planting from all foreign countries, with the exception of seed, until a pest risk analysis has been completed and effective mitigation measures have been determined. This Federal Order will be implemented beginning July 6, 2009.

Prohibited Plant Genus:

Alnus spp. plants for planting, except seed

Countries Prohibited from:

All foreign countries

/s/ **John H. Payne** for

6/22/09

Rebecca A. Bech
Deputy Administrator
Plant Protection and Quarantine

Date