



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara  
Department of Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine

# Horizon Scanning for Emerging plant pests

## The DAFM Pest Risk Analysis Unit (PRAU)

**Andy Bourke and Conor McGee**

Plant Sciences Division  
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
November 4<sup>th</sup> 2021

# Introduction



- Representing the DAFM Plant Science Division laboratories today are the PRAU staff members:
- The purpose of today:
  - (1) Is to introduce the expanded Plant Sciences Division Laboratory
  - (2) Present the newly formed Pest Risk Analysis Unit (PRAU)
  - (3) Discuss our Horizon scanning and Risk Assessment Activities



Andy Bourke



Conor McGee

# Plant Sciences Division



- Fungi and Oomycetes – Richard O’Hanlon (SI)



- Bacteriology – Maria Destefanis (AI)  
– Thuy Doh (AAI)



- Insects and Mites – Robyn Earl (AAI)



- Nematology – Mary Jo Hurley (AAI)

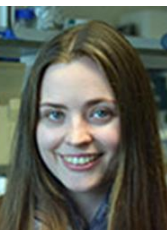


- Honeybee Health – Mary Coffey (AAI)

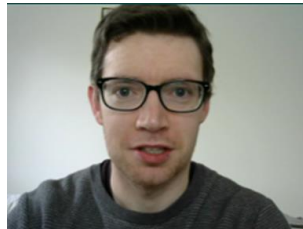


- Viruses, viroids and phytoplasmas – Maria Destefanis (AI)  
– Michele Dellabartola (AAI)

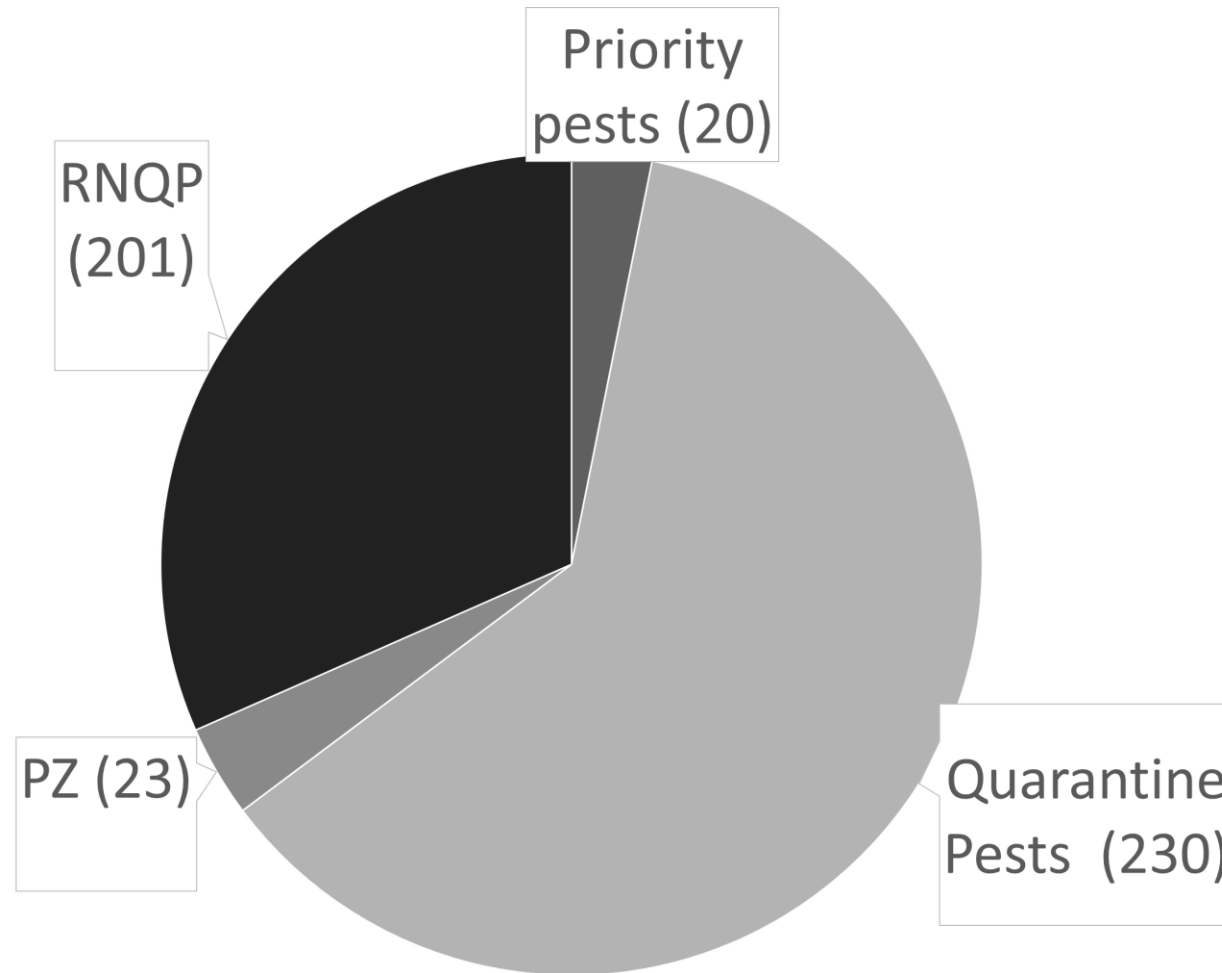
- Molecular diagnostics – Amanda Brechon (AAI)  
Louise Cullen (AAI)



- Pest Risk Analysis – Conor McGee (AI)  
Andy Bourke (AAI)



# Plant Health Regulation - Pests

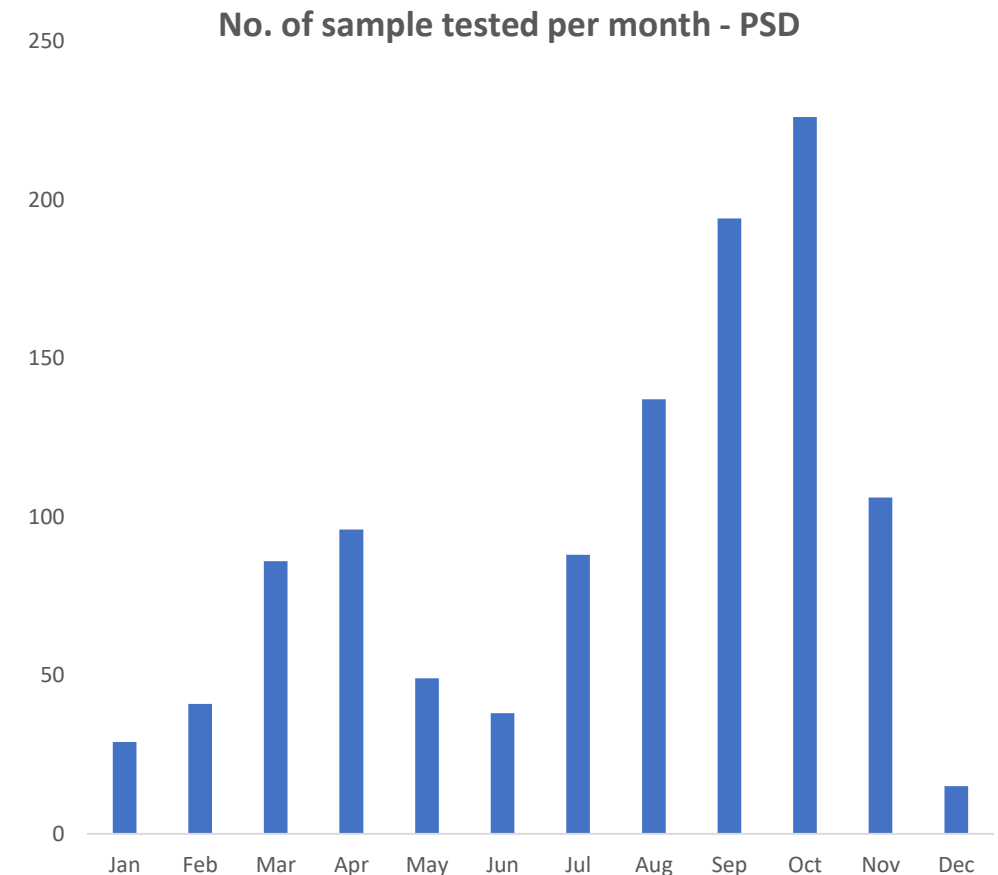


# Diagnostics - 2020



- In 2020 PSD Laboratories received 700 samples (~2500 analysis) for pests and coordinated the analysis of ~2500 samples in conjunction with the Cork laboratories

Target organism	No. Tests
<i>A. plannipennis</i>	38
<i>H. fraxineus</i>	41
OPM	11
<i>P. citricarpa</i>	8
<i>P. ramorum</i> / <i>P. kernoviae</i>	112
<i>Spodoptera frugiperda</i>	29
ToBRFV	31
<i>X. fastidiosa</i>	100
Feed pests	121
Other	173
<i>Erwinia amylovora</i>	1420
<i>Ralstonia</i> and <i>Clavibacter</i>	550
BNYVV	270



# Pest Risk Analysis (PRA)



- The PRAU was created in 2020 as part of the PSD
- Risk analysis was identified as integral to protecting the Irish agri-economy and environment in the Plant Health & Biosecurity Strategy (2020-2025)
- Our main purposes are to perform horizon scanning, undertake risk analysis on plant pests and trade pathways and provide support on request for plant health related issues
- Essentially, its our role is to identify emerging pests threats, assess the level of threat they pose to Ireland, and recommend appropriate measures for how to keep them out



# PRA- Why Undertake PRAs



- Under international trade laws, phytosanitary measures against trade must be technically justified
- EU criteria for identifying pests for which phytosanitary measures can be taken against are outlined in Reg 2016/2031
- PRA is the accepted method to justify regulation of pests and pathways
- Ireland utilises phytosanitary measures on plant trade to a relatively high degree. We currently have the highest number of recognised Protected zones (23) of any EU member state. These exist to prevent pests which have already established in the EU from entering and establishing in Ireland



Oak processionary moth: *Thaumetopoea processionea*



# Plant Pest Threats



- Recent arrivals to Ireland (examples)

*Phytophthora ramorum*;

*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* causing Ash Dieback;

*Bruchus rufimanus* (Broadbean weevil);

*Paropsisterna selmani* (Eucalyptus Leaf Beetle);

*Calonectria pseudonaviculata* (Box blight);

*Cameraria ohridella* (Horse-chestnut leaf miner ) .....





# Plant Pest Threats



- Evolving threats from known Pests: EU regulated (examples)

- *Xylella fastidiosa*
- PZ pests (OPM, *Ips* spp.);
- Tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV);
- *Agrilus planipennis* (Emerald ash borer);
- *Anoplophora glabripennis* (Asian long horn beetle);

- *Xylella*



- *Agrilus planipennis*\*



- *Anoplophora*\*



# Horizon Scanning – What is to come?



- **On the Horizon (currently unregulated)**
- Horizon scanning (what exactly do we mean?): The PRAU continuously monitors a range of sources to identify emerging plant pest threats:
  - Scientific literature
  - Trade journals
  - Media (international, national and social)
  - Expert panels (EFSA ALPHA Horizon scanning WG; EPPO)
- New species      • New locations      • New hosts



# HS – What is to come?



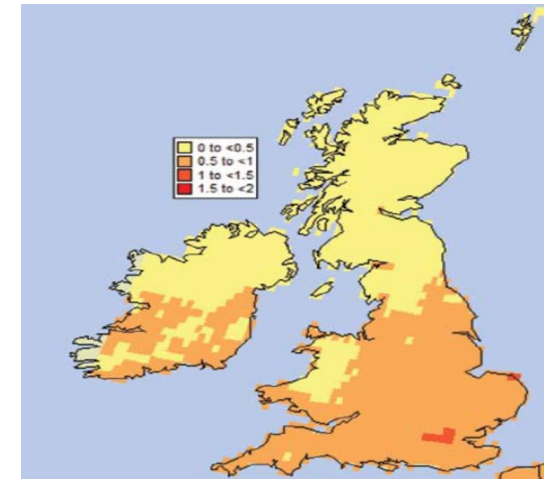
- A number of plant pests have been identified over the course of the previous year, that we continue to monitor all, some we have risk assessed/planning to risk assess. Some examples
- *Halyomorpha halys* (Brown marmorated stink bug)



3D model from <https://sketchfab.com/disc3d>



BBC 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021



Projected potential number of *H. halys* generations per year for current Irish climate (taken from Powell *et al.*, 2021).

# HS – What is to come?



## ➤ Host plant threats

### • Beech

*Litylenchus crenatae* (Beech leaf disease)



*Petrakia liobae*

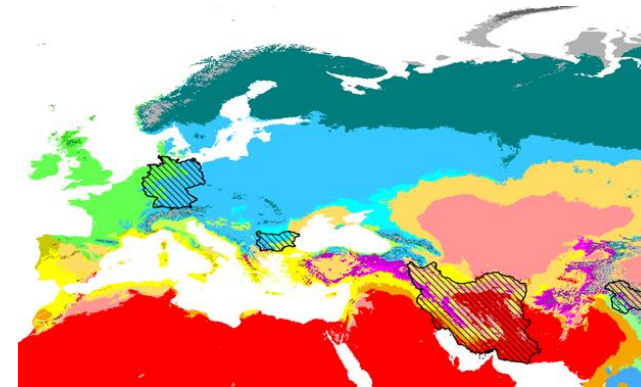


### • Apple

*Diplodia bulgarica* (apple canker)



*Diplodia bulgarica* black canker on apple trees  
(from Hinrich-Berger et al., 2021)



Current known distribution of *Diplodia bulgarica* imposed on  
current Koppen-Geiger climatic classification

# HS – What is to come?



## ➤ Host plant threats

- Agapanthus

### *Enigmadiplosis agapanthi* (Agapanthus Gall Midge)



Images of adult and larvae. From: RHS.

#### Purple pain: Agapanthus flowers under attack from destructive midges

Causes of blooms being damaged by gall midges, impossible to remove once they enter the soil, rocket goose over six years

By Melissa Holmes  
20 August 2021 - 10:10pm



From The Telegraph. August 2021.

- Aquilegia

### *Peronospora aquilegiicola*



Original Article | Published: 26 June 2019

*Peronospora aquilegiicola* sp. nov., the downy mildew affecting columbines in the UK is an invasive species from East Asia

Marco Thines , Geoffrey J. Denton, Elizabeth J. Beal, Anne Kilby, Jennifer O. Denton, Hyeon-Dong Shin & Young-Joon Choi 

*European Journal of Plant Pathology* **155**, 515–525 (2019) | [Cite this article](#)  
443 Accesses | 5 Citations | [Metrics](#)

Original Article | Open Access | Published: 11 August 2020

*Peronospora aquilegiicola* made its way to Germany: the start of a new pandemic?

Marco Thines , Anthony Buaya, Tahir Ali & Thomas Brand

*Mycological Progress* **19**, 791–798 (2020) | [Cite this article](#)  
962 Accesses | 2 Citations | 34 Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

Thines *et al.*, 2019 and Thines *et al.*, 2020



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#### New finding of *Peronospora aquilegiicola* in Germany

*Peronospora aquilegiicola*, the downy mildew of columbines, was first reported in Germany in 2019 in a private garden in Lower Saxony (Niedersachsen) (EPPO RS 2020/131). The NPPO of Germany recently informed the EPPO Secretariat of new findings of this pathogen on plants of *Aquilegia* sp. in two commercial companies in another region, Nordrhein-Westfalen. In the first nursery, plants were grown outdoors. Out of the 6000 plants of the variety concerned, 2280 showed symptoms and were destroyed. The remaining plants were treated with plant protection products. Following the discovery of the first outbreak in Nordrhein-Westfalen, the plant protection service sent a warning note to the horticultural advisory service and another outbreak was detected. Eradication measures have been taken based on a preliminary Express-PRA. All the *Aquilegia* plants grown on the production site (87 620 plants) were declared infested and destroyed. The production site was cleaned of plants and plant debris. Official controls will be carried out in 2021 and 2022 including visual inspections and testing.

The pest status of *Peronospora aquilegiicola* in Germany is officially declared as: **Present, under eradication.**

EPPO Reporting Service no. 05 - 2021



# HS – What is to come?

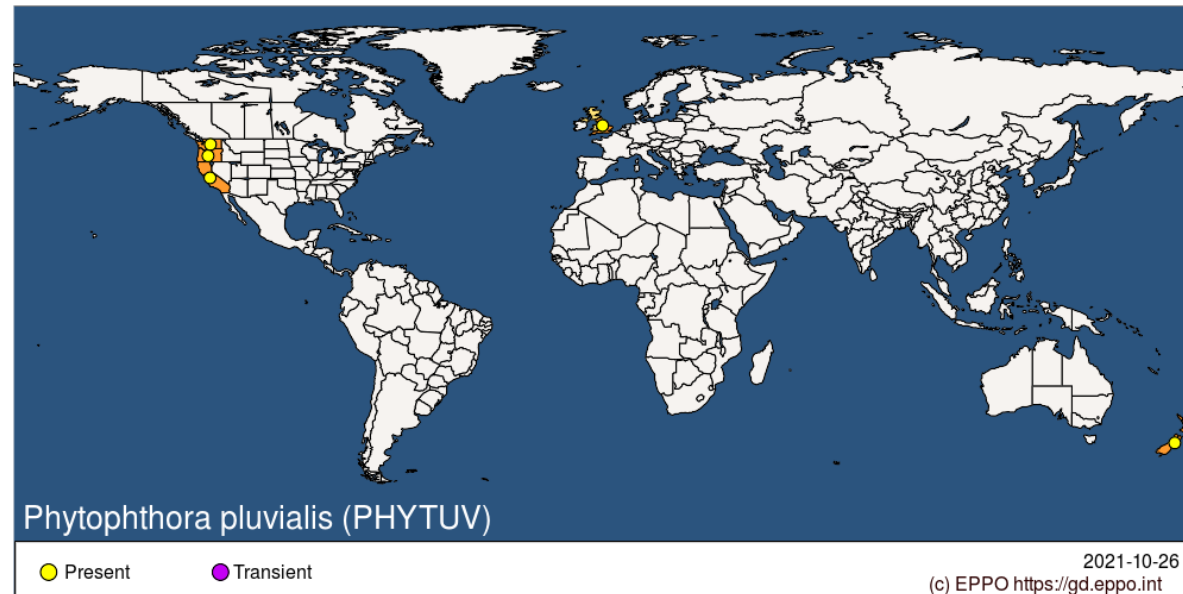


## ➤ V. recent plant threats

- *Phytophthora pluvialis*



Example of *Phytophthora pluvialis* lesions on a tree stem. From Forestry Commission (2021-10-20)  
Guidance on *Phytophthora pluvialis*





# Conclusion



- The Plant Science Division performs its PRA and diagnostics work in conjunction with the border inspectors of ICOPS and the regional plant health inspectors of HPHDs
- The role of the Pest Risk Analysis Unit (PRAU) is to identify and highlight emerging plant pests
  - We undertake these activities to aid in:
    - Preventing their introduction
    - Provide information for in early detection should they arrive
    - Facilitate preparedness through raising awareness in the relevant industries and state agencies
  - For pests the PRAU identify whose introduction could be mitigated against through exclusion and regulation – recommendations will be made
  - Many pests will arrive through unregulated channels – Hitchhiking (*H. halys*), natural dispersion (moths)
  - Many may not be able to currently establish in our climate (though this may change in the future)



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**Thank you for your attention**