

## *Oregon nurseries with susceptible plants must be inspected/certified as SOD-free* **ODA creates regulatory program for sudden oak death**

**June 23, 2004...**The Oregon Department of Agriculture has adopted a temporary rule that creates a statewide inspection and certification program to protect Oregon from sudden oak death (SOD). By establishing a control area throughout the state, ODA is requiring all growers and dealers of plants susceptible to *Phytophthora ramorum*— the fungus that causes sudden oak death— to be annually inspected, tested, and certified free of the disease before they are allowed to sell those plants. The new regulation comes at the request of Oregon’s nursery industry and is in response to last month’s discovery of *P. ramorum* on plants in a Columbia County nursery.

“In order to protect the strong reputation of our nursery products, the industry itself asked the department to design a regulatory program that could assure customers that Oregon nursery stock remains clean and high quality,” says ODA director Katy Coba. “We want the rest of the U.S. and export markets to understand that our nursery industry is not infested with sudden oak death, and that any new introduction of the disease will be detected early and quickly eradicated.”

*P. ramorum* causes leaf blight, dieback, or death in certain trees and shrubs including tanoak, rhododendron, viburnum, and camellia. Susceptible plants include species important to Oregon’s native forests, horticultural landscapes, and the state’s \$778 million nursery industry.

The new regulation also requires nursery growers and dealers who have been inspected and certified clean to buy plant material only from other certified clean suppliers. Plant material brought in from an uncertified source will be held and tested by ODA.

Growers and dealers of plant material susceptible to SOD must also comply with ODA’s notification rule that requires all recipients of tree and shrub nursery stock coming from any out-of-state source to notify the department for possible inspection of the plants. Landscapers and plant collectors are also included in the requirement, which is designed to locate any introductions of sudden oak death before infected plants can reach consumers or other nurseries.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS) is providing funds, personnel, and equipment to ODA in an effort to help meet the demands of the new statewide regulatory program.

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