

*ODA inspects 678 Oregon nurseries. One new positive for sudden oak death*  
**SOD certification program proves to be working**

**September 21, 2004...**The Oregon Department of Agriculture has inspected, sampled, and certified 678 nurseries in the state as free of *Phytophthora ramorum*, the fungus that causes sudden oak death (SOD). However, the inspection program has detected the presence of *P. ramorum* in a Washington County nursery, triggering an immediate administrative directive to place all SOD-susceptible plant material at the nursery on hold pending further sampling and testing. Officials say the overall inspection results and detection of *P. ramorum* during the required inspection for certification shows that the program is working.

“We have taken the necessary action to protect our nursery industry by adhering to the requirements of this inspection and certification program,” says Katy Coba, ODA director. “By making sure only nurseries certified as free of sudden oak death are able to ship their material, we can assure customers nationwide they are getting a clean, quality product. Thanks to our regulatory program, we have isolated the most recent occurrence of SOD and, since its discovery, have kept infected material from leaving the nursery where it was found. This should be a signal that the program offers an important level of protection.”

In June, ODA created a statewide inspection and certification program to protect Oregon from SOD. By establishing a control area throughout the state, ODA requires all growers and dealers of plants susceptible to *P. ramorum* to be annually inspected, tested, and certified free of the disease before they are allowed to sell those plants. The new regulation came at the request of Oregon’s nursery industry. A similar regulation covers Oregon’s Christmas tree industry.

To date, ODA has taken 67,552 samples for laboratory analysis from 1,535 different nursery and Christmas tree growing areas inspected statewide. Earlier this month, samples taken from a Washington County nursery this summer were found to be positive for *P. ramorum*. Host plant material— species susceptible to SOD— have been placed on hold at the nursery. All infected or potentially infected plants will be destroyed. Further sampling and testing will be done to ensure no other infected material remains.

Samples from 136 growing areas that have been inspected are still undergoing initial testing. Samples from 11 growing areas have been forwarded to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for further testing. As required by ODA’s regulatory program, host material from those areas not certified is being held from sale pending test results.

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*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.

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