

## Biosecurity Advice - Update

### Location

NSW Aug-2017 (Updated)

### Pest

*Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum* (CaLsol),

### Situation

- A bacterial plant pathogen has been detected in the Italian Giant variety of imported parsley seed. The bacterium, *Candidatus Liberibacter solanacearum* (CaLsol), is commonly known overseas as 'vegetative disorder' or 'yellows decline'.
- In most cases the bacterium does not damage parsley plants but has the potential to cause serious damage to some other Apiaceae crops which include carrot, celery, chervil, fennel, and parsnip.
- This is the first time this bacterium has been detected in Australia.
- Whilst this disorder is also spread by psyllids, these particular psyllids are not present in Australia, and it is **not** spread by the tomato potato psyllid recently detected in Western Australia.
- It is important that this detection of the CaLsol bacterium in parsley is not confused with the disease known as zebra chip in potatoes, which is associated with the tomato potato psyllid. Zebra chip is not known to occur in Australia.
- After this bacterium was detected in celery, parsley and parsnip seed overseas, Australia introduced emergency measures in April 2017 which required these seeds to be tested or undergo hot water treatment prior to entry. However, the parsley seed in which this bacterium was detected in NSW was imported prior to these measures.
- The NSW Department of Primary Industries tested 20 000 seeds which were voluntarily submitted for testing by a vegetable seed supplier.
- The seeds originated in France but were imported through a supplier in Italy.
- The NSW Department of Primary Industries is tracing the distribution of these affected seeds within NSW and to other jurisdictions which will assist in determining the extent of their distribution.
- The Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests has met to discuss this detection. The committee agreed to prioritise seed tracing activities.

### Food safety

- Parsley that has been grown from infected seeds does not pose any food safety or human health issues. It is safe to eat.

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Developed by the NGIA National Nursery Industry Biosecurity Program Team 2017

This project has been funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia Limited using the Nursery Products levy and funds from the Australian Government

## Biosecurity and reporting

- To assist in preventing the distribution of vegetative disorder, we are advising home gardeners to harvest and eat their parsley before it goes to seed.
- If you are a plant wholesaler or have Italian Giant parsley seed that was imported prior to April 2017, contact your local department of primary industries or biosecurity agency. You can do this by phoning the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.
- All commercial growers and home gardeners, as a general practice, need to be vigilant for new plant pests or disease symptoms. Reporting suspect symptoms can prevent serious and long-term damage to Australia's food production industries.
- Information about good biosecurity practices is available at [farmbiosecurity.com.au](http://farmbiosecurity.com.au).

## About the disease

- Vegetative disorder and yellow decline in carrot was reported from Europe in 2010 in carrot and celery crops only. The disease is wide spread in Europe and infected carrot plants show leaf yellowing, bronze or red leaf discolouration, reduced size of the main root and root proliferation.
- Diseased celery plants show an abnormal number of shoots, stem curling and yellowing.
- Disease symptoms in infected parsley and parsnip plants include yellowing, proliferation and redness of leaves.
- The association of this disease with seed was demonstrated in 2014 in carrot only, so subsequently, Australia introduced mandatory testing or hot water treatment. More recently, the disease was detected in seeds of celery, parsley and parsnip, therefore since April 2017, seeds of these commodities require either seed testing or hot water treatment.

## Trade

- There are no overseas trade implications at this time. The Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources will work with trading partners should any issues arise.
- There are no interstate trade restrictions in place specific to this bacterium.

## About the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pest (CCEPP)

- The CCEPP provides technical and scientific advice in response to exotic plant pest and disease outbreaks. It involves the chief plant health managers and other specialists from federal and state government, Plant Health Australia, and

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representatives from affected industries including Nursery and Garden Industry Australia. It is chaired by Australia's Chief Plant Protection Officer.

- The CCEPP operates in accordance with the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD). The EPPRD is a formal legally binding agreement between Plant Health Australia, the Australian, state and territory governments, and national plant industry bodies which are signatories. The EPPRD covers the management and funding of nationally agreed responses to plant pests and diseases.

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