



Pathogen that has Killed Oaks in California Found in Georgia

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A new threat to oak trees in Georgia exists now due to the importation of nursery plants from California that were infected with the pathogen that causes Sudden Oak Death. This pathogen (*Phytophthora ramorum*) has existed in Europe for many years and is believed to have been introduced in California in the early 1990's. By 1995 Oak trees began dying in California, and the pathogen was isolated and identified in 2000 as the cause of this mortality.

It occurs in 14 counties in California and 1 county in southern Oregon, and the pathogen affects many understory and ornamental plants – primarily on the foliage and twigs but doesn't usually kill these plants. These serve as the source of the spores that saturate the Oak stands and infect the over story trees. The list of hosts grows each month since it is relatively new to North America (and to new regions in U.S.) but many of the most popular ornamentals commonly sold in nurseries are susceptible. A few of these include: camellia, sasanqua, rhododendron, azalea, viburnum, snowball bush and lilac.

It was originally thought that only members of the Red Oak group were susceptible, but we now know that at least some members of the White Oak group have tested positive but **no Oaks in Georgia have been affected yet.** Nurseries within the *known infection area* (of northern California) treated plants with fungicide and all shipments were checked for the pathogen. Shipments from a Monrovia nursery near Los Angeles (out of the known infection area) were found to be infected – March 2004. Shipments from this nursery went to approximately 80 locations in Georgia for the period going back to January 2002. Shipments from this same Monrovia nursery were delivered to every state in the southeastern U.S.

There is still time to prevent this pathogen from escaping into the oaks of Georgia, but prompt action is needed. If homeowners bought Monrovia plants from one of these nurseries since January 2002, please take a sample (entire limb or limbs with numerous leaves showing leaf spots) to your local extension agent.

NURSERIES THAT HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR (*Phytophthora ramorum*) IN GEORGIA

NURSERY NAME*	COUNTY
COFERS HOME & GARDEN INC	CLARKE
CRAVEN POTTERY INC	BANKS
DEEP SPRINGS NURSERIES	WHITFIELD
GREEN THUMB WEST NURSERY & GAR	COLUMBIA
GREENBRIER NURSERY & GIFTS LLC	COLUMBIA
ISLAND ACE GARDEN CENTER	GLYNN
JOHN DEERE LANDSCAPES #173	FULTON
JOHN DEERE LANDSCAPES #172	FORSYTH
JOHN DEERE LANDSCAPES #57	GWINNETT
PIKES NURSERY #2	COBB
SAGO INC d/b/a PLANT PLUS	COFFEE
SOUTHEASTERN WHOLESALE NURSERY #1	GWINNETT
STILL LAKE NURSERY INC	GWINNETT
SHEMIN NURSERIES	GWINNETT

*Nurseries on this list did not knowingly sell infected plants but received them before the federal and state quarantines took effect in March 2004. These nurseries have since been checked and been certified as disease free.

If you feel that you might have bought an infected plant, DO NOT REMOVE it but rather take a sample of the foliage (limb with many leaves and leaf spots sealed in a Ziploc bag) to your local University of Georgia County Extension Office to have it tested. If it is positive for the pathogen, you will be contacted to schedule removal of this plant from your yard. This pathogen has been shown to have spores that readily disperse around the plant and removing an infected plant and disposing of it could further spread this disease to new areas. There is not a charge for the testing and removal of your plants.