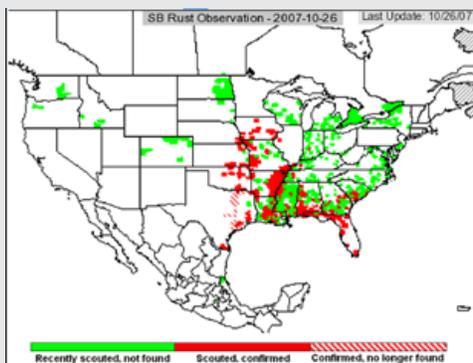


National Updates

Changes to State and Federal Roles for the Confirmation of Asian Soybean Rust, *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*

Changes for the diagnostic confirmation of Asian soybean rust, *Phakopsora pachyrhizi*, were described in a recent announcement released on October 9, 2007 by Richard L. Dunkle, Deputy Administrator, APHIS-PPQ.



Current status of soybean rust (*P. pachyrhizi*) in the U.S. in October 2007, www.sbrusa.net.

From the announcement: "... States are no longer required to send suspect *P. pachyrhizi*-infected host tissue to APHIS-PPQ program for diagnostic confirmation of first State records or new host records. PPQ has removed *P. pachyrhizi* from the "select agent list" and only requires parties who wish to

import or move this organism interstate to apply for a permit.

There are no requirements for importation of soybeans or any other host material, specific for *P. pachyrhizi*. PPQ encourages States to utilize their own diagnostic capabilities and the National

Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN). Because of the extensive training PPQ has provided to diagnosticians, as well as the training provided by the NPDN, APHIS is confident that the morphological and molecular identification procedures are robust. Data, both positive and negative, should be entered into the National Agricultural Pest Information System so that a historical record is maintained particularly for new State and county records."

Issue Highlights:

- ◆ Changes to State and Federal Roles for the Confirmation of Asian Soybean Rust
- ◆ Highlights from the NPDN Strategic Planning Meeting
- ◆ Real-Time PCR Workshop Announcement
- ◆ Diagnostic Subcommittee Update
- ◆ Diagnostic Tip of the Month: An Easy Way to Get Pure Cultures from Fungal Leaf Spots
- ◆ 4th Annual IT/Diagnostician's Meeting Announcement
- ◆ Training and Education Subcommittee Updates
- ◆ Regional Updates: Chrysanthemum White Rust in the Northeast, SPDN Regional Meeting Highlights, SPDN Pest Update, European Yellow Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*) Monitoring in Alaska



National Updates

Highlights from the NPDN Strategic Planning Meeting

Carrie Harmon
SPDN Assistant Director
University of Florida



George Hudler, NEPDN Regional Director, offers entertainment and a break from the hectic meeting by singing a song. (Photo Carrie Harmon, University of Florida)

The Operations Committee of the National Plant Diagnostic Network was in Washington, DC October 10-12 for a strategic planning meeting.

Representatives from all five regions of the NPDN, plus the NPDN National Repository, the IPM Centers, APHIS, and

CSREES discussed plans for the 2008-2012 NPDN Cooperative Agreement.

Important themes included regional responsibilities in diagnostics, training and education, exercises, epidemiology, IT, governance, and partner/client relations.

The three-day meeting was guided by a professional facilitator to create the most productive environment possible. Topics of discussion included writing a new mission statement for the NPDN, development of action items under diagnostics, training, and other main themes, and allocation of budgets regionally and nationally. The new mission statement and other meeting products will be online soon for member feedback and use.

2007 National Soybean Rust Symposium To Be Held December 14-16, Louisville, KY

Now on its third consecutive year, APS is pleased to announce the 2007 National Soybean Rust Symposium.

The symposium will examine soybean rust from virtually every angle. In addition to opportunities to network and explore new areas of investigation, there will be presentations and discussions on molecular biology and genetics, development of disease resistant varieties, use of fungicides, disease management strategies and tactics, computer simulations, experiences and perceptions of producers and crop consultants, and much more.

For more information including program details and registration, please visit the [2007 National Soybean Rust Symposium web site](#).



Members of the WPDN regional center at the recent NPDN strategic planning meeting in Washington D.C., October 10-12, 2007. (Photo Carrie Harmon, University of Florida)

Real-Time PCR Workshop To Be Held January 22-24, University of Kentucky

A workshop on real-time PCR for applied plant pathologists will be held at the **University of Kentucky on January 22-24, 2008.**

We have only one space available for an additional participant.

Participants will execute and interpret four real-time PCR experiments, extract DNA, and run a gel.

Topics include theory of real-time PCR, experimental controls, PCR inhibition, use of PCR kits, licensing, minimizing sample contamination, and troubleshooting. Primer design is not included in the workshop.

For more information, contact Paul Vincelli (pvincell@uky.edu).

Diagnostic Subcommittee Update

Karen L. Snover-Clift
Subcommittee Chair
Cornell University
Department of Plant Pathology

The NPDN diagnostic subcommittee held a conference call on October 19, 2007. Please refer to the diagnostics subcommittee web page of the [NPDN web site](#) for complete minutes of this meeting (login and password required).

Topics of discussion included:

- Review of recent operations committee strategic planning meeting.
- Beltsville-NPDN diagnostician training planning.
- Soybean rust suspect sample

handling requirements change.

- Mycotoxin workshop being offered by Gail Ruhl and Nina Zidack.
- 4th IT-Diagnostician's Meeting plans.

Diagnostic Tip of the Month: An Easy Way to Get Pure Cultures from Fungal Leaf Spots

Clarissa Balbalian
Diagnostician/Lab Manager
Mississippi State University

One easy way to get pure cultures from fungal leaf spots is to position the leaf piece over a culture plate using either double-sided tape or petroleum jelly.

Place a piece of double-sided tape or a dab of petroleum jelly on the inside of a Petri dish lid. Mount a piece of sporulating leaf tissue on the tape so that the non-sporulating side is down against the tape (Figure 1). Place the lid back on the Petri dish, parafilm the lid (Figure 2) and allow time for the spores to drop onto the agar surface and germinate (usually around 24 hrs).

Remove single spores or small colonies from the agar surface and transfer to the desired culture medium for growth and identification (Figure 3).

Continued on page 4...

Diagnostic Updates



Figure 1 and 2. Double-sided tape is placed on the cover a Petri dish (top). The leaf of interest is attached to the Petri dish cover so that the sporulating side faces the agar (bottom).

National Database

Continued from page 3...

You may want to examine one with a compound microscope to make sure you are transferring the targeted organism.

Single conidial isolates should grow into pure cultures (Figure 4), preferably of the fungus you are looking for!

NPDN National Database

Mike Hill
CERIS Programmer/
Analyst
Purdue University

4th Annual IT/ Diagnostician's Meeting

If you have been invited to attend the 4th Annual IT/
Diagnostician's Meeting,
time is running out to make reservations
for the meeting.

This year's meeting will be held at the Adam's Mark hotel in St. Louis on November 28-29, 2007:

[Adam's Mark Hotel](#)
315 Chestnut Street
St. Louis, MO 63102
1-800-444-2326

Members of the PDIS change management team will meet for a half day on the afternoon of Tuesday November 27th. The IT/Diagnostician's meeting will begin on Wednesday November 28th

at 8:00am and conclude on Thursday November 29th at noon. There will also be a PDIS users meeting in the afternoon on November 29th along with an Epidemiology meeting during the same time.

Reservations should be made at the [Adam's Mark](#) hotel by calling 1-800-444-2326 and mentioning the "NPDN" meeting to get the block room rate of \$119/night.

The following transportation is available to the hotel from the airport:

Trans Express Shuttle Service
314.427.3311

VIP Car & Limo Services (Lina)
636.946.9996

President Casino Shuttle
314.622.1111

Laclede Cab Co.
314.652.3456

Buses: Greyline
314.241.1224

Metro Link – 8th & Pine (4 blocks away)
\$3 each way

Taxi
\$25-30 each way from Airport

Bus Parking: S & H Parking
314.621.1602

Please contact Mike Hill at 765-494-9854 if you have any questions about the upcoming meeting. We look forward to seeing you in St. Louis.

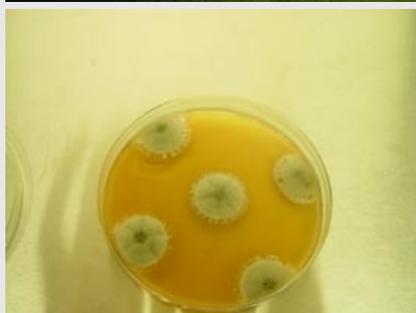
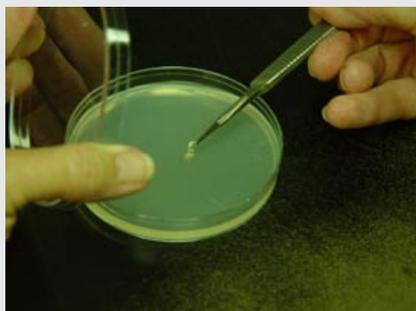


Figure 3 and 4. Spores or single colonies can be transferred to a new agar plate (top). Pure culture colonies from single conidial isolates (bottom).



Education and Training Subcommittee Updates

Amanda Hodges

Subcommittee Chair

University of Florida

Department of Entomology and Nematology

Reminder: Register Your Training Sessions

Don't forget to register your First Detector training sessions on the new Training & Education web site at: <http://cbc.at.ufl.edu>. The new Training & Education web site has many advantages including the following:

- Simplified, streamlined forms for entering session information and participant data.
- Options for excel batch upload of participant data with an available template.
- Session organizers are able to view, edit, and manage their participant registry information.
- State training coordinators can review data within their state.
- Available information can be used by state coordinators to create a listserv of the First Detectors in their state.
- You can use the web site for registering people online for a

training session, even without requiring users to create a login username and password.

- The newly revised version of the NPDN First Detector Educator Training Manual provides step-by-step instructions for registering training sessions.

Contact Amanda Hodges achodges@ufl.edu or your [Regional Training & Education Coordinator](#) if you have questions regarding this site.

Online Learning-Soon to Be Released!

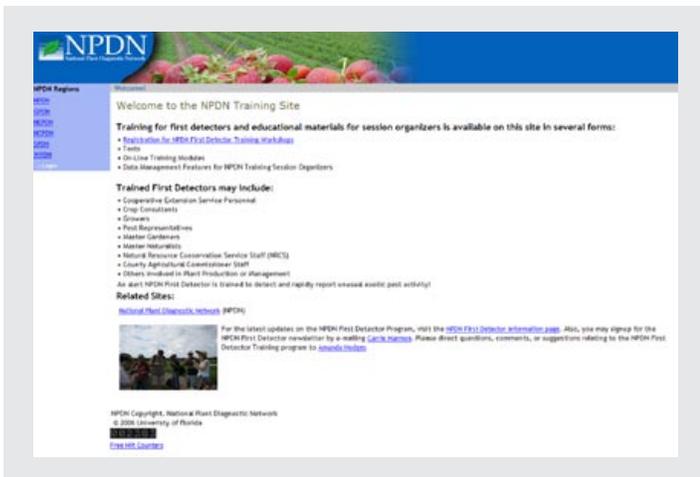
Gerald Holmes, Howard Beck, and Gerry Snyder will soon release the NRI Crop Biosecurity online learning modules.

The NPDN training & education subcommittee has been extensively involved in the review process, and there is much excitement regarding the release of the modules in a new, innovative format.

Note: The online modules will also be located at the new [NPDN Training & Education web site](#). If you forget the web site address, you can always access the site through the [NPDN First Detector Information web page](#). Stay tuned for more information!

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Training and Education



Regional Updates

Continued from page 5...

Master Gardener Training

Mary McKellar and Dave Clement of the NEPDN,

are co-organizing a national ad-hoc working group to develop a template for Master Gardener training. In general, there has been agreement from members of the NPDN training & education subcommittee as well as educators within the network that the current modules may need to be simplified and targeted to the Master Gardener audience. The Ad-Hoc Working group is working diligently to develop this general 'Master Gardener' template for core First Detector training.

Northeast Region



Chrysanthemum white rust. (Photo Central Science Laboratory, U.K., www.forestryimages.org)

Chrysanthemum White Rust (*Puccinia horiana* P. Henn) Found in Connecticut

Chrysanthemum white rust (CWR) was confirmed by APHIS at two separate nurseries in Hartford and Fairfield Counties in Connecticut in early September.

To date, State officials with the Connecticut Agriculture Experimental Station (CAES) have inspected approximately 5,900 host plants statewide for CWR and have identified

signs of infection in 850 plants at the two affected nurseries. Over 1,800 infected or exposed host plants were destroyed at

both facilities by incineration or burial. CAES and APHIS are following the National CWR Management Plan for Exclusion and Eradication

CWR has been reported to be confirmed in three other Northeastern states this fall.

For more information about CWR, please visit on the web:

[USDA-APHIS Pest Information Page: Chrysanthemum White Rust](#)

Southern Region



SPDN Regional Meeting Blacksburg, VA October 17-18, 2007

Carrie Harmon
SPDN Assistant Director
University of Florida

The Southern Plant Diagnostic Network met as a region in Blacksburg, VA, on the Virginia Tech campus October 17-18.

Representatives from all 12 states and one territory reported on past accomplishments and planned for the 2007-2012 Cooperative Agreement.

Important themes included training databases and the new web site, diagnostic database and entomology tools, SPDN images in the Bugwood Network database, the new www.SEPDN.org portal, and training opportunities for pathology and entomology.

Continued on page 7...

Continued from page 6...

The meeting included a tour of the pathology and entomology laboratories and a working dinner with a slide show of member photographs and a demonstration of the www.sepdn.org portal. Thursday's morning meeting focused on planning for the future, identifying priorities for the regional center and state goals. Three working groups followed the formal meeting: DDDI, wikiIPM, and the legume virus ipmPIPE.

The one and a half day meeting was extremely productive, while minimizing travel time for participants. Collaboration with the Virginia Tech personnel resulted in time to appreciate the campus, balanced with working time on and off campus.

The next SPDN meeting may be at another campus; members will be surveyed and results and other meeting information and documents will be available on the "Meetings" page of www.sepdn.org.

SPDN Pest News

Amanda Hodges
SPDN Assistant Director
University of Florida

A new U.S. whitefly species continental record, the fig whitefly *Singhiella simplex* (Singh) has recently been identified from *Ficus benjamina* L. in Miami-Dade County Florida. Severely infested trees appear to be shedding or defoliating their leaves.

This species has previously been reported from Burma, China, and India, and is considered an economically significant pest of *Ficus* in India. Host range does appear to be limited to *Ficus*.

Regional Updates

Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Division of Plant Industry
Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner Richard Gaskalla, Director

PEST ALERT

The Fig Whitefly *Singhiella simplex* (Singh) (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae): A New Exotic Whitefly Found on *Ficus* Species in South Florida

Greg Hodges, ghodges@doacs.state.fl.us, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry

INTRODUCTION: Specimens of the fig whitefly, *Singhiella simplex* (Singh) (Hemiptera: Aleyrodidae), were recently collected from *Ficus benjamina* L. by Henry Meyer (UF-IFAS, Miami-Dade County Extension agent) and Ernie Martin (homeowner). This find was thought to be the first field of this whitefly for the Continental United States. However, an earlier sample collected by FDACS/DPI Inspector Keith Robertson on August 3, 2007 on *Ficus benjamina* was initially misidentified. Upon further review of the slide, the identity of this whitefly was determined to be *Singhiella simplex* and should be considered as a US CONTINENTAL RECORD.

DESCRIPTION: Infestations of fig whitefly are easy to locate on *Ficus benjamina*, as infested plants with severe infestations will appear to be dropping or "shedding" many of their leaves and may appear defoliated (figs 1, 2). If the foliage is disturbed, there will be small clouds of tiny white, grub-like adult whiteflies flying from the foliage. The body of the adult whitefly is yellow in color and the wings are white with a faint gray band towards the middle of the wing (fig. 3). Immature stages (eggs, nymphs and pupae) can be found on the underside of the leaves. The pupae are small tan to light green discs with red eyes (fig. 4) measuring about 1.3 mm long and 1 mm wide.

BIOLOGY: There is little literature on the biology of the fig whitefly. In Florida, the life cycle may be similar to that of the other *Singhiella* species that are present in Florida (*Singhiella citrifolii* (Morgan)), with at least three generations per year.

HOSTS: *Maraceae: Ficus altissima* Blake, *Ficus benjamina* L., *Ficus religiosa* L.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE: *Singhiella simplex* is reported as a pest of *Ficus* species in India.

NATURAL ENEMIES: *Encarsia tricolor* Foerster (Hymenoptera: Aphelinidae)

DISTRIBUTION: Burma, China and India

FLORIDA DISTRIBUTION: Miami-Dade County

[Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services Division of Plant Industry Fig Whitefly Online Pest Alert.](#)



The SPDN held their most recent regional meeting on October 17-18, 2007 in Blacksburg, VA. Photos: A presentation on the Bugwood Network database (left), meeting participants networking (center) and meeting participants got the opportunity to tour both pathology and entomology laboratories at Virginia Tech (right). (Photos Carrie Harmon, University of Florida)



European Yellow Underwing (*Noctua pronuba*), An Exotic Pest Monitored in Alaska

Michele Hebert,
NPDN Leader for Alaska
University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Alaska is utilizing WPDN funding to monitor an exotic pest by providing salary funds for IPM technicians acting as triage diagnosticians.

WPDN funds are also being used for distance diagnostic equipment to identify and capture images of new pests and diseases. First detector training has provided valuable information for field staff who are watchful for invasive species. Monitoring includes sending photos of potential invasive species to sentinel lab diagnosticians. One of these exotic pests that is being monitored is the European yellow underwing.

The European yellow underwing, *Noctua pronuba*, was first recorded in North America in Nova Scotia in 1979. Since then it has rapidly spread throughout the rest of Canada and the United States. In 1995 it was discovered in Haines, Alaska. From 1998-2002 the range expanded approximately 1800 miles, 450 miles per year. It is expected to be in interior

Alaska by 2009. Climate change in the form of warmer winters and earlier springs are believed to contribute to the increase in this pest's movement.

European yellow underwing caterpillars are considered to be cutworms and feed on foliage and stems. They often snip plants off at the soil line or totally consume them. This caterpillar is a generalist feeder and feeds on many varieties of agricultural and ornamental

plants. Caterpillars are active during thaws in late winter and early spring and also during most planting seasons. Host plants include tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, beets, cabbage, tobacco, and other cole crops. Caterpillars also feed

on ornamentals such as Potentilla, dogwoods, hawthorns, grasses, and cultivated flowers.



European yellow underwing. (Photo Derrick Ditchburn, Forest Health Management International, <http://www.dereila.ca/whispers/>)

National Events

November 28-29, 2007, [4th Annual IT/Diagnostician's Meeting](#), St. Louis, MO

December 9-12, 2007, [ESA Annual Meeting](#), San Diego, CA

December 12-14, 2007, [2007 National Soybean Rust Symposium](#), Louisville, KY

March 24-26, 2009, [Sixth International IPM Symposium](#), Portland, OR

Northeast Region

February 26-28, 2008, NEPDN Regional Meeting, Chadds Ford, PA

Upcoming Events



[Mary McKellar](#) Editor
NEPDN
Cornell University

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