

FACT SHEET—PHYTOPHTHORA

Distributed by CNPS-Santa Clara Valley Chapter (www.cnps-scv.org) 2-27-2016

What is Phytophthora?

It is a plant pathogen. One species causes Sudden Oak Death (SOD).

What is new?

- Many *new* exotic types of Phytophthora have appeared in the nursery trade and spread into the wild landscape from restoration sites.
- It can affect non-native as well as native plants.
- It can be spread by water, soil, re-using contaminated pots, shoes, tools, and tire treads.

Can we assure you that CNPS-SCV nursery plants are Phytophthora-free?

- Unfortunately no – unless we have definitive tests done on each plant we produce there is no guarantee. We did remove all Diplacus hybrids (Monkeyflowers) from our Fall Sale and some of those plants subsequently tested positive for a phytophthora. All those plants have either been destroyed, or tested negative for pathogens.

What is the CNPS-SCV nursery doing?

- We are continuing testing our plants, and new tests may become available which facilitate testing of more of our plants with better pathogen differentiation.
- We are sterilizing pots.
- We are working on upgrading to Best Management Practices (BMP) for a clean nursery. It is a major investment and will take some months to institute all the required changes.

What should I do?

- Ask your local nursery to explain what they are doing to prevent its spread—most have not started dealing with this emerging problem.
- Buy plants from nurseries that have instituted Best Management Practices.
- Don't plant nursery plants in the wild or near open space until you know they are safe, because Phytophthoras have *devastated* some restoration sites.
- Visually inspect any plants you buy.

What can I look for?

- Healthy looking plants above ground.
- Phytophthoras cause root rot. Infected plants will wilt—and watering won't help.
- Inspect roots: roots should be light-colored, not dark and brittle.
- An infected plant may not show symptoms—hence there are no guarantees.

Which native plants are most susceptible?

- Sticky Monkeyflower
- Toyon
- Coffeeberry
- Manzanitas
- California Lilacs (Ceanothus)
- Salvias (Sages)
- Artemisias
- Coyote Mint

Where can I get More Information?

<http://ww2.kqed.org/science/2015/01/12/tiny-parasite-threatens-native-plants/>

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLyHJjt9y0tE1kNKETQGAawN5oB0Sj9Nyr>

<http://www.suddenoakdeath.org/diagnosis-and-management/nursery-information/phytophthora-tentaculata/>