

Pest Alert: *Xylella*, what you need to know and do



Fig 1. Symptoms of *Xylella fastidiosa* on *Lavandula x allardi*.

Photo: Agnès POIRIER, NPPO of France



Fig 2. Browning of leaf edges (*Xylella fastidiosa*) on *Acer negundo*.

Photo: John Hartman, University of Kentucky

Xylella fastidiosa- the facts:

- *Xylella* is a bacterial disease which can kill plants by stopping them taking up water.
- At present *Xylella* is NOT known to be present in the UK but it can affect a large range of plants.
- *Xylella* has been reported in southern Italy, France including Corsica, Spain including Balearic Islands, as well as several non-EU countries.
- The symptoms of *Xylella* are difficult to spot as they are similar to those caused by heat stress on leaves (see pictures above for *Xylella* symptoms).

What you can do:

- Before buying a plant check which country it originated from. Don't risk buying plants where the origin is unknown.
- Purchase plants from a garden centre, nursery or shop that can assure you that their plants were sourced from a *Xylella* free area.
- Don't panic if you see symptoms that look like *Xylella* – first think whether they could be due to hot weather, drought, stem/root damage or frost damage.
- Check when the plant was purchased, as those imported in the last couple of years represent the highest risk.

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

Tel: 0300 1000 313 (please select option 3 when calling)

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

Web: <https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/uk-plant-health-risk-register/>

For Scotland, contact the Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit or RPID officer:

Agricultural crops contact the local RPID officer: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/AOcontacts/contacts>

For non-agricultural crops, email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

For Northern Ireland, contact DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health

For finds in the wider environment:

In GB, please use Tree Alert: <https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/>

For NI, please use TreeCheck: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/about-treecheck>

If you have serious concerns that your plants are infected with *Xylella* then please contact your relevant plant health officials

For further information:

Defra plant health portal high profile pests and diseases:

<https://planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk/pests-and-diseases/high-profile-pests-and-diseases/xylella/>