



## IMPACT OF DETECTING A NEW PATHOGEN IN THE U.S.

### ISSUE – A NEW PATHOGEN THAT THREATENS THE NURSERY INDUSTRY AND NATURAL ECOSYSTEM

- Oregon's top agricultural commodity is the nursery industry with a value of \$1.22 billion annually (NASS 2022).
- In 2024, the Oregon State University (OSU) Plant Clinic detected *Phytophthora austrocedri* for the first time in the U.S. from a Juniper sample submitted by a nursery.
- The pathogen infects plants in the Cypress family, which include juniper and arborvitae, posing a risk to the nursery industry.
- Native forest species, such as Port Orford cedar and western red cedar, are also at risk should this pathogen establish in forestlands.



**Wilting and crown canker on juniper caused by *P. austrocedri***

### RESPONSE

- The OSU Plant Clinic worked with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to report the pathogen to USDA-APHIS.
- The ODA worked with USDA-APHIS to survey infested nurseries, identify new hosts, and to remove infected plants.

### RESULTS

- OSU Plant Clinic provided rapid identification and communication when this pathogen was introduced into the U.S. facilitating regulatory response.
- Response included raising awareness in Oregon on the risk of *Phytophthora* to the nursery industry.
- Information of the new pathogen was shared with diagnosticians in other states to raise awareness of this new risk.
- Researchers initiated studies to evaluate fungicides and better understand the biology of this new problem to develop management strategies.



**Damage caused by *P. austrocedri* on juniper in a woodland in Scotland. Photo credit: Crown Copyright Forest Research.**

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*The NPDN is critical for maintaining relationships between diagnostic clinics and regulatory agencies so we can surveil emerging pathogens and prevent their spread - Mana Ohkura, Director of Oregon State University Plant Clinic*

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*The NPDN expands our capacity to detect and respond to novel plant pathogens. In the case of *P. austrocedri*, the NPDN was key in identifying the causal pathogen to species. Going forward the OSU Plant Clinic will continue to provide identification services to industry and support ongoing research efforts. – Chris Benemann, Plant Protection Division Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture.*

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