

2014 Scottish Growing Crop Survey for *Dickeya*

The 2014 growing season marks the 4th consecutive season that Scotland has maintained its freedom from *Dickeya*. In total, 650 samples were tested this year from field grown potatoes showing signs of blackleg. The pathogen was not detected in any of these samples.

Dickeya solani, a major pathogen of potato in many European countries and Israel, has been found previously in a small number of ware crops grown in Scotland in 2009 and 2010, all of which were produced from non-Scottish-origin seed. With the support of industry, who continue to make informed choices particularly with regards to the origin of their seed, and the introduction of strict legislation in 2010, Scotland maintains its freedom from this pathogen.

These results serve as a further reminder that purchasing Scottish-origin seed potatoes is an effective means of maintaining this freedom.

Contact: Professor Gerry Saddler

Deputy Head of SASA & Head of Potato & Plant Health

Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)

Roddinglaw Road, Edinburgh, EH12 9FJ, UK

T: +44(0)131 244 8925 | F: +44(0)131 244 8988 | E: gerry.saddler@sasa.gsi.gov.uk |

Background:

The 2014 survey was carried out in support of Scottish legislation which established a “nil” tolerance for *Dickeya* infections in seed crops. It’s designed to target crops which hold the greatest risk of carrying or contracting the disease and includes all seed and ware crops produced from non-Scottish origin seed.

There was a reduced level of non-Scottish origin crops grown in 2014. In all there were 58 seed crops from Northern Ireland; comprising 53 pre-basic seed crops with no blackleg observed at inspection, the remaining 5 basic seed crops all presented blackleg symptoms and were sampled and tested. In addition, 3 ware crops grown from Northern Irish seed and 5 out of 6 crops originating from England and Wales exhibiting blackleg symptoms were sampled and tested.

Also targeted were a large group of crops deemed to be at higher risk and included potential close contact stocks – seed and ware stocks taken from farms which had a *Dickeya* infected crop in 2009-10 and seed and ware crops grown in the vicinity of watercourses known to be infested/previously infested with *Dickeya* spp..

Finally, a representative sample of Scottish-origin seed crops were also included, comprising of roughly 10% of all seed crops showing blackleg symptoms during inspection (a small number of ware crops were also included in this category).

No samples tested positive for *Dickeya* spp..

Table 1. Breakdown of samples included in the 2014 survey

Region	Type of Crop					Total
	Seed	Ware	Non-Scottish Origin	Seed crops at higher risk	Ware crops at higher risk	
Northern	12	-	-	-	5	17
Grampian	181	-	3	4	2	190
Central	264	-	1	16	34	315
Southern	52	7	11	1	57	128
TOTAL	509	7	15 (from 13 crops)	21	98	650