



The results of the EU project QBOL deposited in the Q-bank database to support Plant Health Diagnostics

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Abstract

The rate of introduction and establishment of damaging plant pests and diseases has increased steadily over the last century as a result of expanding globalisation of trade in plant material, climate change, EU expansion, and by a recognised decline in the resources supporting plant health activities. Furthermore there is a constant decline in the number of taxonomic specialists in the different disciplines (mycology, bacteriology, etc.), capable of identifying plant pathogens, and funds to support this kind of work are very hard to obtain. Also the number of other specialists in phytopathology and other fields which are vital for sustaining sound public policy on phytosanitary issues are diminishing. These problems affect all members of the EU and other nations. In this context QBOL (www.qbol.org), an EU project on DNA barcoding, started in 2009 to generate DNA barcoding data of quarantine organisms and their taxonomically relatives to support plant health diagnostics. The data are included in a database, called Q-bank (www.Q-bank.eu). Q-bank now consists of a dynamic open-access database of quarantine plant pests and look-alikes, linked to curated and publicly accessible reference collections. It contains sequence and morphological data including photographs, nomenclatural and diagnostic data of specimens available in reference collections.

Within Q-bank curators from many countries with expertise on taxonomy, phytosanitary and collection issues for the different groups have been appointed and links with other databases have been made; this in order to provide Q-bank an international role in supporting plant health agencies.

The results of the QBOL project will be presented as well as the Q-bank database.