



Masterplan Phytophthora: the Dutch knowledge network for integrated late blight control in potatoes

Jan Buurma¹ and Bas Janssens¹

¹LEI, part of Wageningen UR, P.O. Box 29703, 2502 LS The Hague, the Netherlands

Abstract

In the end of the 1990s the Dutch potato sector faced big challenges in controlling *Phytophthora infestans* in potatoes. The disease became more and more aggressive and the package of fungicides available became more and more narrow. For that reason the farmers together with researchers designed a masterplan in an attempt to make the disease manageable again.

In the course of the years the knowledge network and the division of tasks between the knowledge partners involved gradually took shape in an integrated network of inspection services, fundamental research, applied research and advisory services. Starting from twelve years of reports on late blight in the trade journal 'Boerderij' we reconstructed the division of tasks between the knowledge partners involved. The reconstruction shows that application of IPM principles requires commitment and support of a wide range of knowledge partners.

The IPM principles covered by the Masterplan Phytophthora are clearing the primary sources of infection, enhancing genetic resistance, forecasting infection periods and avoiding tuber infection. For each principle you need specific partners who enforce compliance with regulations, develop genetic knowledge, supply resistant cultivars, disseminate actual knowledge, provide decision support, supply effective fungicides, support post-harvest handling, etc..

The potato farmers in the Netherlands perceive that the masterplan has made them more successful in late blight control. A remaining challenge is the lack of univocal messages from the various types of advisors. Suppliers of decision support systems emphasize other aspects than suppliers of pesticides. Possible solutions for this problem will be discussed during the presentation.