

Mission Report 2007

Fire Blight (*Erwinia amylovora*)

(Harallamb Paçe) - draft

Summary of activities 2007

The Swiss Project for Horticultural Promotion in Kosovo (SPHP-K) during 2007 has been invited a plant protection expert Prof Harallamb Paçe to provide consultancy and assistance in three missions.

June 2007, expert has carried out monitoring surveys on apple, pear and quince in the nurseries, mother orchards and orchards supported by the project. Samples were collected and analyzed in laboratory in Plant Protection Institute in Durrës. 50% of the samples were detected as infected with fire blight. A training session was organized, as well.

November 2007, a training session for Fire Blight (symptoms, recommendation for possible measures to limit disease) has been organized for SPs, IC staff and two officers from MAFRD (fruit and plant protection officer).

December 2007, a training session has been organized for nurserymen - producers of propagative/planting materials about the importance and need for the establishment of a certification program for CAC standards. During the mission, two trainings have been organized for farmers of Anamorava and Dukagjini regions. MAFRD and SPHP-K have invited fruit producers, nurserymen, agriculture departments, municipalities, inspectorates etc...

Suggestions by Expert

Suggestions are focused more in technical aspect (Integrated management) but some are related to the government:

Suggestion for government

- To establish immediately an adequate legislation related to the disease management and to implement it immediately
- Strictly inspection of border entry points of propagation/planting materials including seedlings. The infected materials must be prohibited to entry in Kosovo
- With states that Kosovo has two or more border entry points, the planting materials should enter only from one border point entry
- Establishment a forecasting system for fire blight disease in Kosovo

Technical suggestion

- Removal, by pruning, of cankers, dead/burned shoots, twigs, flower clusters, shriveled leaves and other dead tissues. Pruning must be done in dormant season in winter. When the trunk is infected extirpation of the whole tree may be necessary. The pruned material must be burned out of the orchard
- Attention must be paid to the wild hosts and other secluded fruit tree hosts around the orchards
- Chemical sprays. After pruning: 2-3% of Bordeaux mixture + 1% mineral white oil (spray oil), till the bud burst stage (green tip) of bloom development. During the growing season the copper compounds must be used according to label recommendations of the product formulation. Other formulations such as Kocide, Aliete can be used during growing season. **Antibiotics** can be used with the special **permission** from the **government** only

- Use of non-infected trees in new orchards. They must be analyzed before putting in the market
- Choosing resistant fruit varieties and rootstocks
- Inspection of the trees during the blooming time and after
- Avoiding the flowers in the nursery. The bees should not be allowed to fly in infected orchards
- Chemical sprays immediately after hard rains, late frosts, hail, strong storms, etc that causes wounds in the plant tissues
- Maintaining good control of insect populations will reduce the spread and incidence of fire blight
- Nurseries that have a fire blight history within or around them should be closed
- Creation awareness through organizing trainings
- Establishing CAC¹ requirements in production of propagative/planting materials of fruit trees in Kosovo
- Establishing new technologies (*“in vitro”*) in production of the fruit tree propagative/planting material (a long term objectives)

How much is the fire blight serious in Kosovo

Based to the current situation in Kosovo a dramatic situation could be in the next growing season if no or slowly actions will be taken. In future, young trees, in new established orchards, will die before producing fruits commercially due to infestation from old orchards nearby. The economic losses can be high. It is the time to act strongly and quickly. A real strategy is needed and a combination of all measures is necessary to be programmed and immediately implemented.

¹ **What is: CONFORMITAS AGRARIA COMMUNITATIS – CAC**

CAC is category of production that represents rules and conditions to be met by fruit propagating material and fruit plants intended for fruit production.

CAC sets rules for limiting the presence of plant diseases or harmful organisms prejudicial to the quality of planting materials. CAC is compulsory

(Related EU directives: 77/93/CEE; 92/34/EC; 93/48/EC; 93/64/EC; 93/79/EC; 2000/29/EC; 2002/89/EC)