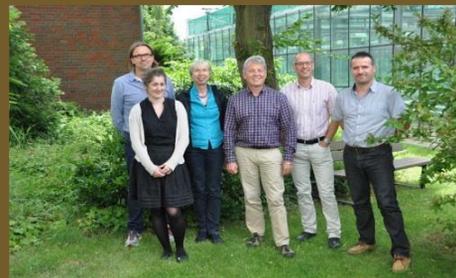


# VirusCollect II: building an international network of reference collections for regulated and other important plant viruses and viroids



## Funding

Non-competitive funding mechanism. Each funder only pays for the participation of their own national researchers. Total funding € 247 000

## Research consortium

NVWA (NL), Anses (FR), DSMZ (DE), SASA (GB), NFCSO (HU), WUR (NL), FGBU-VNIKR (RU), MKGP (SI), CISTA (CZ)

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## Key outputs and results

- Defined and implemented quality standards (SOP's or equivalent) for reference collections at participating laboratories, i.e. on characterisation of isolates, handling, storage and providing isolates and materials
- Characterized 'new' or 'interesting' isolates according to the standards
- Characterized isolates included in Q-bank, the comprehensive databases on quarantine plant pests and diseases (<http://www.q-bank.eu/>), for sharing data and making isolates available for the plant virus community, and ensuring their maintenance in a (recognised) reference and back-up collection

## Goals

Decreasing budgets and loss of experienced staff in plant health had dramatic effects on the quality of viruses and viroids collections and the accessibility of characterized isolates. For diagnostic and research laboratories, the availability and reliability of isolates from reference collections is of utmost importance. Therefore, efforts are needed on sharing data as well as isolates from reference collections (Roehorst et al., 2013)<sup>1</sup>. Most laboratories do not have means to establish a 'certified reference collection' under ISO 34. They endorse, however, the need for reliable reference isolates or materials that fulfil basic quality standards, e.g. under ISO 17025. Therefore, collaboration at an international level might be beneficial to define a minimum quality standard and ensure the long-time availability of isolates and reference materials in plant virology. The ultimate goal would be the foundation of a network of virus collections to provide reliable reference isolates and materials for research and diagnostics.