



Euphresco Success story

December 2015

International Plant Sentinel Network workshops

Botanic gardens and arboreta are a unique resource, ideally suited for sentinel research as they offer the opportunity to study pest damage on plant species outside their natural ranges. Sentinel research can provide key information to address knowledge gaps important for pest risk assessments, as well as information on potential future threats. Garden staff are well-trained, engaged individuals with a wealth of knowledge and expertise. They are able to recognise, record and report changes in plant health quickly and systematically.



The International Plant Sentinel Network (IPSN) is facilitating collaboration among relevant institutes around the world in order to provide an early warning system of new and emerging plant pest risks so that appropriate mitigating measures can be taken.

One key element of the IPSN is raising capability and capacity in botanic gardens and arboreta to increase awareness and knowledge of good biosecurity practice and provide personnel with the skills to survey and report pest and disease problems. In 2015 the IPSN ran two international workshops that saw great participation from botanic gardens, National Plant Protection Organisations and plant health scientists in priority and/or hard to reach countries. Workshops provided training, networking opportunities and the chance to develop and share best practices.

The first workshop was held at the Fairy Lake Botanical Gardens in Shenzhen (China) and was attended by representatives from 17 institutes including botanic gardens, universities, CABI China and government officials from the local area and Hong Kong. This was the first of its kind in China and participants have since set-up a dedicated chatting tool to provide a platform for continued communication regarding biosecurity and plant health.

The second workshop was held at Huntington Botanical Garden in San Marino, California (USA), and focused on two new plant health threats to



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the region, the polyphagous shot hole borer *Euwallacea sp.* and the golden spotted oak borer *Agrilus coxalis*. The two-day event included a field trip to outbreak sites of both pests, giving participants first-hand experience of the damage these organisms can cause. The workshop was attended by representatives from five Mexican botanic gardens, a number of professionals working within Mexico who concentrate on native flora and/or plant pests, Huntington Botanical Gardens, other local gardens, and governmental agencies.

Information collected during these workshops was used for fine-tuning pest risk analysis and entries into the UK Plant Health Risk Register.

Project ID: Establishing the basis for an International Plant Sentinel Network as an early-warning system for future pest threats (IPSN).