

Press release

Stuttgart, 14.07.2011

Innovative test system for *Xanthomonas axonopodis* pv. *poinsettiicola*

IDENTXX, a biotechnology company based in Stuttgart, in cooperation with Selecta Klemm GmbH & Co. KG has developed a secure and fast system to detect pathogens that cause bacterial leaf spots on Poinsettia.

Detection and identification within five days only

The test system, developed by IDENTXX GmbH, allows PCR-based detection of *Xanthomonas axonopodis* pv. *poinsettiicola* (XAP) within five days, inclusive genomic characterizations of most frequent strains. Since XAP first appeared in Europe (Germany and Italy) in 2003, seedling producing companies have desperately sought a suitable system to detect the pathogen in large stocks. In the past, test systems were only able to detect infected plants, at best, 14 days after infection and were not useful for broad screening.

Selecta Klemm GmbH & Co.KG (Selecta) became aware of IDENTXX's pre-developed high quality XAP-test system in 2009. Shortly after, IDENTXX and Selecta developed the existing system further as a secure tool for analyzing large stocks of Poinsettia mother plants.



Poinsettia breeding plants in Uganda



Selecta's „Clean Plant Guarantee“ label

Over 12,000 plants
tested within one
season

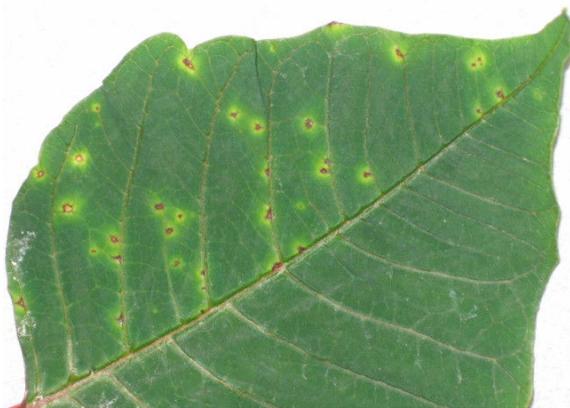
Approximately 12,000 Poinsettia mother plants were analyzed by IDENTXX for routine testing in 2010/2011 with all conducted tests confirming the whole mother plant stock of Selecta to be totally free of XAP. The performed analyses essentially contributed to product assurance at Selecta and became an important part of Selecta's „Clean Plant Guarantee“-label that was implemented in 2011. The cooperation of two innovative companies has increased product and quality assurance of the whole Poinsettia production thus contributing to the quality assurance of the whole green sector.

The test system

Ten mother plants can be analyzed at once for XAP infection due to the PCR-based test system. The high throughput and reproducibility make the system a useful tool for mass screening of visually symptomless plants. The system is supplemented by microbiological analyses within Selecta-diagnosis laboratories.

The pathogen

Xanthomonas axonopodis pv. *poinsettiicola* (XAP) causes bacterial leaf spots on Poinsettias that can eventually lead to crop losses that threaten the existence of Poinsettia breeding companies. The disease is so threatening that the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) added XAP on the EPPO A2 Quarantine-list in 2008. By doing this, they recommend the European Commission to classify XAP as a quarantine disease. This would lead to far-reaching consequences for the entire sector.



Leaf of Poinsettia infected with *Xanthomonas axonopodis* pv. *poinsettiicola*

IDENTXX GmbH

Long-standing
experiences in PCR
based analyzes

IDENTXX GmbH is a research-oriented biotechnology company, divided into two business divisions, phytopathology and weed sciences. They develop PCR-based systems to detect and identify pathogenic microorganisms. The company was founded in 2009 and is based in Stuttgart and is a pioneer in analyzing plants for herbicide resistance using pyro-sequencing technologies. Their customers gain profit due to the long-standing experiences of all team members and solution tailored exactly to their needs.



Detection and Identification of XAP by using PCR-based analyze methods

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