



# growers' advice

## Fight against Blight

### ISSUE 5: BLIGHT ON THE BPC WEBSITE

**Fight Against Blight 2006**

**Blight Maps**  
Blight mapping is a service from the British Potato Council first introduced in 2003 which enables you, the industry, to track blight outbreaks in your area throughout the season. These blight pages are rebuilt for the 2006 season.

As well as featuring the blight maps, this section of the BPC web site links to all the relevant information that the BPC has on blight, and to other blight related websites.

**SMS/email alerts**  
Register now for SMS or email alerts of confirmed blight outbreaks. You can receive alerts for upto 10 postal districts.

**Free**  
Register for free blight incident SMS and email updates!

If you have already registered for Fight against Blight and want to edit your details please [click here](#)

Please click on a map to see your region in more detail >>

**New for this season**

Fight against Blight by ... Controlling Outgrade Piles  
To order a copy (GB only), email [BPC Publications](mailto:BPC.Publications) or call 01865 782222

**growers' advice**

- Fight Against Blight 1 - Potato outgrade hygiene
- Fight Against Blight 2 - Seed health
- Fight Against Blight 3 - Planting
- Fight Against Blight 4 - Volunteer control

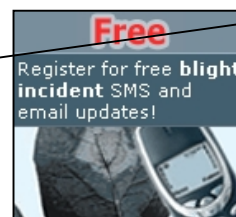
Please click here to read [advice sheets](#)

**More blight information**

- UK Blight Forum 2006
- Blight Fungicide Application Technology survey and spray coverage demonstrations 2004
- Independent Blight Fungicide Trials (Summary - years 1 & 2)
- 2003/2005 map archives

[www.potato.org.uk/blight](http://www.potato.org.uk/blight)

**Maps** All the available maps are displayed so you are one click away from your area's blight status.



**Register for updates** You can register postcode areas for which you would like notification of new incidents. Whenever a blight outbreak is confirmed in your nominated areas you will receive a text message on your mobile or an email (or both) prompting you to look on [www.potato.org.uk/blight](http://www.potato.org.uk/blight) for details.

**Expert comment** Ruairidh Bain of SAC and Nick Bradshaw of ADAS are again providing weekly expert comment. Register for weekly bulletins by email.

**Best practice** The complete series of Fight against Blight Growers' Advice sheets are accessible here.

**More blight information** Latest technical information highlighted as it becomes available, for example:

- UK Blight Forum report 2006
- Application technology report

**Detailed information** Every sample sent to the laboratory by BPC Blight Scouts is featured in a sortable table beneath each map, both regional and country-wide. All columns can be sorted, including Outbreak Size, Variety, Date reported, Source, Postcode Area, and Lab Result. Blight Scouts (and their clients) can check their own samples using the secure identification number in the first column. Scouts will also get a text message saying 'negative' or 'positive' for each of their samples as the information becomes available.

ID	Outbreak Size	Variety	Reported	Source	Area	Result
11827	Patch (1m2)	Estima	20/09/2004	Crop/Other	NR10	•
11746	Scattered through field	Maris Bard	08/09/2004	Volunteer	CT9	•
11719	Several Patches	Unknown	04/09/2004	Crop/Other	PE11	•
11692	Scattered through field	Unknown	04/09/2004	Crop/Other	PE37	•
11611	Patch (1m2)	Sante	02/09/2004	Crop/Other	OX44	•
11503	Scattered through field	Russet Burbank	31/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR28	•
11422	Scattered through field	Russet Burbank	31/08/2004	Crop/Other	IP22	•
11395	Scattered through field	Estima	31/08/2004	Crop/Other	IP31	•
11368	Single Plant	Estima	31/08/2004	Crop/Other	IP31	•
11341	Single Plant	Desiree	27/08/2004	Crop/Other	IP25	•
11071	Single Plant	Other Maincrop	25/08/2004	Crop/Other	IP12	•
11044	Very Severe	Shepody	25/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR12	•
10936	Several Patches	Maris Piper	24/08/2004	Crop/Other	PE7	•
10855	Scattered through field	Estima	23/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR9	•
10828	Scattered through field	Estima	23/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR9	•
10801	Scattered through field	Estima	23/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR9	•
10504	Several Patches	Lady Rosetta	19/08/2004	Crop/Other	WS15	•
10450	Scattered through field	King Edward	19/08/2004	Crop/Other	CO10	•
10396	Several Patches	Other Maincrop	18/08/2004	Crop/Other	NR12	•
10369	Very Severe	Marfona	18/08/2004	Crop/Other	PE11	•
10342	Scattered through field	Sante	18/08/2004	Crop/Other	PE12	•
10234	Scattered through field	Russet Burbank	17/08/2004	Crop/Other	B79	•
10153	Patch (1m2)	Maris Piper	16/08/2004	Crop/Other	CT3	•
10145	Several Patches	Maris Piper	15/08/2004	Crop/Other	PE12	•

## How does the system work?

BPC has recruited volunteer Blight Scouts who report any incidence of blight they find during their normal activities. They log the incident by sending a text message with just the first part of the postcode where the infection was found (e.g. PE12), and the system replies with a unique ID number. This postal district determines the position of a dot on the website maps, so it may not be close to where the outbreak occurred. The scout then posts a sample with its ID number to the laboratory for confirmation (using a BPC supplied kit) and includes the following background information:

- Size of infection - from single plant through to very severe infection,
- Variety of sample,
- Date sample was found,
- Source of infection – was it from a conventional/organic, outgrade pile, volunteers etc.,
- The scout also has the opportunity to add any other relevant comments.

This information is used in the data tables beneath each website map.

## Who can be a blight scout?

Anybody can be a blight scout. Farmer, agronomist, adviser - anybody that regularly monitors potato crops during their daily work can register for a scout pack that provides the information and sampling kit to send suspected outbreaks for confirmation. The system is designed to be very straightforward and non-time consuming for scouts. For more information please contact Mark Prentice, details below.

## Why use Blight Maps?

Combining a forecasting method with the blight maps will give a more comprehensive picture of risk in the local area. This will allow better product choice, better timing and better targeting of the blight sprays in the field.

- Current forecasting methods for blight use local weather information to give an assessment of the risk that blight will spread. They do not provide any information on whether the disease is present or absent.
- The only other way to find out about blight locally is through word of mouth, which often provides an incomplete picture.
- BPC blight maps are independent and free from commercialisation.
- Blight is becoming harder and more costly to control. More tools are needed to improve decision making.
- There is increasing pressure to reduce and justify pesticide inputs.
- Loss of tin removes the “fire engine” approach, resulting in a greater emphasis on prevention through better targeting of protectant fungicides.



## How to use the maps

Maps and data tables are updated twice a day. The information provided by Blight Scouts during each interval appears as an orange dot. It then changes according to the legend below when the laboratory keys in the background information accompanying the sample and test result.

- Suspected case (orange dot)
- Confirmed volunteer case (red square)
- Confirmed on outgrade pile (red triangle)
- Confirmed crop case (red circle)
- Blight not detected (green dot)
- Multiple confirmed reports in one area will be shown by increasing the size of the symbol.

**Please Note:** We rely on information reported to us, verified by laboratory testing. Outbreak markers are plotted according to postal district, and may therefore not show the exact location of the outbreak. These points should be borne in mind when using the mapping service.  
The BPC will not be liable for any costs, loss or damage resulting from interpretation of, or decisions based on, the information provided.

## European experiences

Many of our European countries use variations of blight maps as a decision support tool, including Ireland, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands as well as many Scandinavian and Eastern European countries (there are links to some of these on the website). The BPC have studied these to help formulate the system that is running in Great Britain. European experiences suggest that such a mapping service can help improve blight control by:

- Better targeting of the first fungicide through a better understanding of the local blight pressure,
- Possibly reduce fungicide use in low-pressure years,
- Giving more confidence in the decisions being made on spray programmes,
- Building a better understanding of the original outbreaks and movement of blight, so advice can be tailored,
- Providing samples that can be used for research to develop a better understanding of the biology of blight.

**If you require more information on how to become a blight scout or how the service works, please contact:**

**Mark Prentice, BPC Agronomist**

**Tel: 0131 472 4149 Email: [mprentice@potato.org.uk](mailto:mprentice@potato.org.uk)**