

A Comparison of *Dothistroma septosporum* Isolates from Two Forest Districts in Britain

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Abstract – Red band needle blight is a potentially lethal disease of pine trees, caused by the fungus *Dothistroma septosporum*. Until the late 1990's this disease was not considered to be a major problem in Britain, however it is now found throughout the country causing widespread damage, primarily on Corsican pine (*P. nigra* ssp. *Larico*).

This study sought to establish whether there is any variation *in vitro* between isolates from two Forest Districts (East Anglia and New Forest) in Britain. To do this linear growth rates on artificial media, biomass production, culture morphology and spore size was examined. Although there were differences in linear growth, biomass and culture morphology between isolates, there was no distinct grouping between isolates from the two geographical locations. In contrast, there was pronounced geographical variation in conidial length and width. Further studies are underway to investigate the genetic variability of these isolates.

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