

FOR INFORMATION  
DA-2020-09  
April 21, 2020

Subject: Detection of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 in a United States  
Greenhouse

To: State and Territory Agricultural Regulatory Officials

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) confirmed detection of the pathogen *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 (Rs R3bv2) in a symptomatic geranium (*Pelargonium* sp.) plant located in a Michigan greenhouse. Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) officials issued an Emergency Action Notification to the Michigan business to immediately prohibit the sale or movement of all geraniums and any other suspect plant material on the property. Rs R3bv2, commonly referred to as Southern wilt, bacterial wilt, and brown rot of potato, causes a wilt disease in several important agricultural crops such as potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant.

The geranium sample that tested positive was from a Fantasia 'Pink Flare' variety of geranium, which had been imported from a production facility in Guatemala. The importer is cooperating fully in the investigation, has voluntarily stopped sales of all Fantasia 'Pink Flare' geraniums from Guatemala, and has agreed to destroy all shipments that are pending export or in route to the United States. They have also provided APHIS with a list of U.S. greenhouses that received Fantasia 'Pink Flare' geranium cuttings from the same facility.

APHIS and State Officials are inspecting all greenhouses that received Fantasia 'Pink Flare' geranium cuttings, collecting trace-forward information, and destroying all Fantasia 'Pink Flare' geraniums and co-mingled and exposed host and non-host plants. Cleaning and disinfecting the greenhouses will follow APHIS-approved methods.

For more information on Rs R3bv2, please see the following Pest Alert:

<https://www.ncipmc.org/projects/pest-alerts1/ralstonia-solanacearum/>

For additional information about the Ralstonia Response Program, please contact Erin Otto, National Policy Manager, at [erin.m.otto@usda.gov](mailto:erin.m.otto@usda.gov), or 301-851-3881.



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