

Questions around the origin of *Spongospora subterranea* f.sp *subterranea*

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Abstract

Since many years potato breeders and multipliers in Europa (and elsewhere) face regularly, sometimes huge problems with powdery scab contamination in their peat-substrate based multiplication steps. Often the substrate seemed to be the only inoculum source but it could never be confirmed. Recently, molecular tests of 'virgin' substrate performed in a German breeding company affected by powdery scab indicated for the first time the presence of *Spongospora* in commercially available substrate and in peat field samples. When samples of peat in a commercially explored moor were collected and tested by PCR one quarter showed positive results. Hypotheses and wild speculations derived from these results will be discussed.