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PlantSci Newsletter – a monthly round-up of plant science policy headlines and stories

April 2018

News

Plant health and biosecurity

[European ash epidemic caused by just one or two fungal spores from East Asia](#)

Europe's ash dieback epidemic could have been caused by just one or two mushroom-like fruiting bodies of a fungal pathogen from Asia, according to newly published research.

[Knotweed 'cannot be eradicated', Swansea Uni trial shows](#)

[Asian hornet identified in Lancashire](#)

An Asian hornet has been found in Lancashire and surveillance activity is underway.

Agriculture

[EU member states support near-total neonicotinoids ban](#)

[New requirements for farmers to improve environment for all](#)

New rules are now in force which will protect the water environment and save farmers money.

[Europe's current approach to food, agriculture, and the environment is not sustainable](#)

Launching a new report, the European national science academies along with the InterAcademy Partnership called for European policy-makers to urgently re-think their approach to food and agriculture.

[US gene-editing ruling delights plant scientists](#)

Ruling paves way for creation of new genetically altered crops.

Biodiversity and conservation

[Climate change threatens rare British orchid that tricks bees into mating](#)

Researchers find that warmer temperatures are upsetting the seasonal relationship between the early spider orchid and pollinating bees.

['Send in the drones' to protect soil](#)

[Make half of world more nature-friendly by 2050, urges UN biodiversity chief](#)

Call by Cristiana Paşca Palmer comes ahead of a major biodiversity conference in Beijing in 2020.

Sustainability

[Biofuels plant reopens after four month shutdown](#)

Opportunities

[Plant Health Undergraduate Studentships](#)

Nine summer studentship projects on plant health are available for bioscience undergraduates. The selected students will work with leading plant health researchers, gaining great experience as well as receiving a bursary. The projects will run for 10 weeks over summer 2018. The studentships are arranged by the UK Plant Sciences Federation (UKPSF) with funding from Defra, BSPP and N8 AgriFood. Deadline for applications: 9 May 2018.

[Resilience of the UK food system in a global context third call: Transforming the food system for health, sustainability and resilience across production and demand](#)

The Global Food Security Programme is inviting expressions of interest from early career researchers at lecturer level or equivalent to take part in a Sandpit (2.5 days on 4-6 July 2018 followed by 2 days on 19-20 July 2018) to address the following question: How can we transform our food system so it is based on healthy and sustainable diets and how would this impact on sustainable and resilient food production and supply?

Applications are welcomed from early career researchers at lecturer level or equivalent with expertise in any research area covered by BBSRC, NERC or ESRC. Application deadline: 23 May 2018, 16:00

Consultations

[The future for food, farming and the environment](#)

The Government is seeking views on its proposals for future agricultural policy in England.

Closes 8 May 2017

Events

[Investigating mental health in the research community](#)

Student mental health needs are attracting wide attention, but there is concern that others in the academic and wider research environment may have mental health needs that have not been as well explored and considered. This has prompted the STEM learned societies to come together to take action and tackle this problem.

11 May 2018, London

[Plant Biology Europe 2018](#)

PBE is jointly organized by FESBP and EPSO, as a result of a merger between the previous individual EPSO and FESBP conferences. With a multidisciplinary approach to plant science in a global context, the conference aims to collect speakers and presentations that cover wide ranging scientific and policy related themes within plant science, thereby showcasing state-of-the-art scientific developments and contributions to policy shaping towards plants science at the European and national levels.

18-21 June, Copenhagen

[Advances in plant reproduction – from gametes to seeds](#)

This satellite meeting is the result of the demanding investment efforts made in the last years, by the plant reproduction scientific community, in understanding the basis of reproductive traits and its relationship with the plant phenotypic plasticity. It aims to gather enthusiastic experienced researchers, PhD students, early career researchers and academics within the fields of plant reproduction and development, but is also intended for plant reproduction publishers, companies and stakeholders that will be able to disseminate this new shared knowledge worldwide.

30 June – 1 July 2018, Florence

[SEB Florence 2018](#)

Discover the art of creating extraordinary science at SEB's Annual Meeting in Florence, Italy from 3 – 6 July 2018 at the Firenze Fiera Congress and Exhibition Centre.

For the full events list, please see the [UKPSF website](#).

And finally...

[Trees are not as 'sound asleep' as you may think](#)

High-precision three-dimensional surveying of 21 different species of trees has revealed a yet unknown cycle of subtle canopy movement during the night.

UK Plant Sciences Federation
Royal Society of Biology
Science Policy Team
Charles Darwin House
12 Roger Street
London
WC1N 2JU
policy@rsb.org.uk

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Charles Darwin House, 12 Roger Street, London WC1N 2JU