

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

June 2018

News

Plant health and biosecurity

[One new species of 'micro-moth' found in Britain every year](#)

Experts say almost 30 species of pyralid moths have flown in or been transported via the horticultural trade.

[Zigzag elm sawfly attacking trees in UK, warn experts](#)

Elm leaf-eating pest has gradually travelled across Europe from Japan, leaving mark reminiscent of that by Zorro's sword.

Agriculture

[Multi-million pound boost for crop resilience](#)

New funding to develop scientific breakthroughs in crop research and innovation.

[Agricultural intensification not a 'blueprint' for sustainable development](#)

New research suggests that the combined social and ecological results of increased agricultural intensification in low and middle-income countries are not as positive as expected.

[EU court decision on plant breeding techniques 'normally' before summer break](#)

The European Court of Justice (ECJ) should "normally" decide on the future of the so-called new plant breeding techniques (NPBTs) before the summer break in July.

[Europe's top science advisers send clear message on food production](#)

Report on plant protection highlights the fragmented nature of current decision-making on agriculture.

[European Commission under fire after new CAP proposals unveiled](#)

The European Commission unveiled on Friday (1 June) its plans for the post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy, triggering a strong reaction from EU farmers and the environmental community for cutting the budget, giving member states too much leeway and fudging environmental and climate issues.

Biodiversity and conservation

[Pollution hits the fungi that nourish European trees](#)

Pollution is changing the fungi that provide mineral nutrients to tree roots, which could explain malnutrition trends in Europe's trees.

[Tree Champion to expand England's woodland](#)

Sir William Worsley has been appointed to bolster planting rates and grow green spaces.

Sustainability

[UK agriculture benefits from nearly £2 million support towards sustainability improvement](#)

Four new interdisciplinary projects received £1.8 million to improve the sustainability of UK farming.

[Government's environmental principles and governance consultation examined](#)

The Environmental Audit Committee explores whether the consultation's proposals meet the Government's ambitions to create a 'world-leading' environmental watchdog and provide insight into how it could be established and implemented.

Opinion

[G7 can tackle five priorities with one investment: agricultural research](#)

This week the representatives of the world's most advanced economies grapple with complex challenges at the G7 summit in Canada. Smart investments need to be made to solve the five key issues addressed at the summit and the smartest investment is in agricultural research, writes Marco Ferroni.

[High risk of food shortages without pesticides, says chemical giant](#)

Head of Syngenta, world's biggest pesticide maker, says rejecting farming tech could have serious consequences within 20 years.

[Europeans deserve a food policy that focuses on the environment and people's health](#)

The European Union's common agricultural policy is a sprawling programme of farming subsidies that covers everything from income support for farmers to supporting the promotion of products such as wine. No wonder then that the European Commission, the EU's executive branch, wants to "modernise and simplify" the policy.

Opportunities

Opportunity to review draft of plant science report

The [UK Plant Sciences Federation \(UKPSF\)](#) is creating a short report for policymakers, that aims to demonstrate the value and potential of UK plant science. Review by the community will be integral to the final report which has a working title *UK Plant Science: Growing the Future*. The draft will be available to review for a two-week period only from 26 June 2018. To register your interest in joining the reviewer pool, please email consultation@rsb.org.uk providing your name, role, organisational affiliation and confirmation of your availability.

Deadline for expressions of interest: 23 June 2018

Placement for STEM teachers: Syngenta (Berkshire)

Join UK-leading organisation Syngenta for a placement where you can immerse yourself in the world of STEM outside of the classroom.

Consultations

Public consultation on the Evaluation of the 7th Environment Action Programme

Closes 26 July 2018.

New environment law to deliver a Green Brexit

Environmental Principles and Governance Bill announced as consultation launches on new body to hold government to account. The RSB response to this consultation is currently in draft. Please contact consultation@rsb.org.uk for more information and if you would like to contribute.

Closes 2 August 2018.

Events

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.

3 – 6 July 2018, Florence

[State of the World's Fungi Symposium](#)

Join scientists and policymakers for our first ever two-day symposium on the State of the World's Fungi.

13 – 14 September 2018, Kew

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

And finally...

[Dogs can detect agricultural diseases early](#)

Study shows dogs can sniff out laurel wilt-infected avocado trees well in advance.

UK Plant Sciences Federation

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