

PRESS RELEASE



of the International Bremia Evaluation Board Europe (IBEB-EU)

Gouda, July 1 2024

A new race of *Bremia lactucae*, BI: 41EU, identified and denominated in Europe.

Bremia lactucae, the causal agent of downy mildew in lettuce, is genetically very variable. Even within one lettuce production field, several races may be present. Monitoring the changes in the *Bremia* population is important for breeders and growers. The International Bremia Evaluation Board Europe (IBEB-EU) has collected more than 845 *Bremia* isolates from lettuce in 2023 and early 2024 (up to March) in Europe.

In 2023, the official races BI: 38EU, BI: 39EU and BI: 40EU were often found, whereas the official races BI: 35EU, BI: 36EU and BI: 37EU were found at a very low frequency. However, one virulence pattern, herewith referred to as race BI:41EU, corresponding to the isolate REQ2301723, was found in 3% and 10% of the isolates in 2023 and 2024 (up to March), respectively. This virulence pattern of this isolate appeared for the first time in 2022.

	2023	2024 (up to March)
BI: 38EU	21%	4%
BI: 39EU	4%	1%
BI: 40EU	18%	26%
BI: 41EU (REQ2301723)	3%	10%

A formal evaluation process started in December 2023. In April 2024, the IBEU-EU concluded that the candidate isolate provided consistent test results.

REQ2301723, from France, is denominated as the type isolate of new race BI: 41EU with IBEU-D sextet code 62-31-07. **BI: 41EU** was found repeatedly in France, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. BI: 41EU breaks many resistance genes including R53, R55, and R56.

The board emphasizes the importance of chemical control and hygiene measures in addition to plant resistance. Fungicide application, especially in a young plant stage, gives additional protection to resistant lettuce crops, which will help prevent the development of new *Bremia* races. Proper hygiene practices, such as removal of debris and diseased plants, cleaning of farm equipment and prevention of prolonged periods of leaf wetness, will reduce the spread of *Bremia* in lettuce crops.

Editorial note :

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