

# PRESS RELEASE



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

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## **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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