

Spiroplasma citri : a wide host range phytopathogen.

ABSTRACT

Spiroplasmas are helical motile filamentous, wall-less and culturable mollicutes. Thirty six spiroplasma species have been identified. Only *S. citri*, *S. kunkelii* and *S. phoeniceum* have been identified as plant pathogens. *Spiroplasma citri*, the causal agent of citrus stubborn disease, have a wide host range. *S. citri* infects most citrus species and cultivars and a wide range of non-rutaceous plant species. Citrus stubborn disease widely distributed in the southwestern united states of America, northern Africa and Mediterranean countries. It is naturally transmitted by phloem-feeding leafhopper vectors. *S. citri* can be detected by grafting to citrus indicators, culturing on artificial media, serological, DNA probes, dot-immunobinding assay, Immunocapture Polymerase Chain Reaction (I C- PCR), Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and real-time PCR. There is genetic variability among isolates of *S. citri*. © 2011 Asian Network for Scientific Information.

Keyword: Detection; Non-rutaceous host; Spiroplasma species; Stubborn.