

EPPO codes: a brief description



What are the EPPO codes?

EPPO codes are computer codes which were developed for plants, pests and pathogens which are important in agriculture and plant protection.

This harmonized coding system was created to facilitate the management of plant and pest names in computerized databases, as well as data exchange between IT systems.

The development of this coding system was initiated by BAYER in the 1970s. In 1996, BAYER transferred to EPPO the maintenance and development of the coding system. During the 1990s/2000s, EPPO developed an interface called EPPT (EPPO Plant Protection Thesaurus) facilitating access to codes and names, and developed a hierarchical system. In 2007, it was agreed to rename BAYER codes as EPPO codes. In 2014, the whole EPPO coding system was transferred into a new database (EPPO Global Database) which is freely available from the Internet.



General coding principles

Pests and pathogens: 6 letters = 4 (genus) + 2 (species)

B E M I T A *Bemisia tabaci*

Cultivated and wild plants: 5 letters = 3 (genus) + 2 (species)

S O L T U *Solanum tuberosum*

1 taxon = 1 unique code



EPPO codes are included in a database

Today, the database covers more than 68 800 species that are important in agriculture and plant protection.

- 36 000 plant species (cultivated, wild, weeds)
- 24 000 animal species (e.g. insects, mites, nematodes, rodents), biocontrol agents
- 8 500 microorganism species (e.g. bacteria, fungus, viruses, viroids and virus-like)
- 300 non-taxonomic entities (e.g. crop groups, pest groups)

For each organism, the database provides:

- EPPO code
- Preferred scientific name and authority
- Synonyms and other scientific names
- Common names in different languages
- Elements of taxonomy

Every year, many codes are created and revisions are made to names or taxonomic elements.

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Elements of taxonomy

EPPO codes are provided for the main steps of the taxonomic tree and coding has been harmonized for each level (e.g. all codes for families starts with 1 and ends with F). In addition, parent/child relationships have been created between each taxonomic level.

Kingdom	Animalia	1ANIMK
Phylum	Arthropoda	1ARTH P
Subphylum	Hexapoda	1HEXA Q
Class	Insecta	1INSE C
Order	Hemiptera	1HEMIO
Suborder	Sternorrhyncha	1STERR
Family	Aleyrodidae	1ALEY F
Genus	Bemisia	1BEMIG
Species	Bemisia tabaci	BEMITA

How to deal with taxonomic changes?

Change of preferred scientific name:

Gnorimoschema absoluta => *Tuta absoluta*
The code **GNORAB** remains the same

Newly described species:

Phytophthora pinifolia
A new code **PHYTPF** is created



Recent progress

A new interface (EPPO Global Database)

EPPO codes can be viewed and obtained via EPPO Global Database. This new database also contains all pest-specific information prepared by EPPO (e.g. geographical distributions, datasheets and pictures, EPPO Standards, EPPO Reporting Service articles).

Development of codes for non-taxonomic groups

Codes for non-taxonomic plant or pest groups are needed, in particular in the field of plant protection products to describe uses. The EPPO Secretariat is exploring possibilities to further develop this set of codes.

Facilitate the use of EPPO codes in IT systems

The EPPO codes are now freely available under the terms of an **open data** licence. New **web services** are being developed to facilitate the downloading of EPPO codes so that they can be used in other IT systems.

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN PLANT PROTECTION ORGANIZATION

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