Ash Dieback Disease

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative) Click here to watch Sarah speak

We have already seen one dangerous tree disease spreading into other species—phytophthora. Is there any evidence of Chalara spreading into other species, either on the continent or here?

David Heath (Somerton and Frome, Liberal Democrat)

I do not believe that there is evidence of Chalara crossing species at the moment, but I will check that and give the hon. Lady an accurate response. She is right about phytophthora, which is well evidenced. In the case of Chalara fraxinea, we are dealing with a specific issue for the ash tree but, as she will be aware, fungal diseases are sometimes more easily spread between species than some other pathogens. I will examine all the evidence and write to her if there is any suggestion of cross-species spread.

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