PRESS RELEASE

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

Gouda, July 1, 2026

No new emerging threat from *Bremia lactucae* in Europe in 2026.

Bremia lactucae, the causal agent of downy mildew in lettuce, is genetically very variable and may develop new races that overcome host plant resistance in lettuce crops. 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) collected 381 Bremia isolates from lettuce between 2025 and early 2026 (up to April) in Europe. The most recently denominated races (Bl: 38-Bl: 41) were still dominant and thus important:

	2025 (n=327)	2026 until April (n=54)
Bl: 38EU	13%	20%
Bl: 39EU	5%	0%
Bl: 40EU	5%	2%
Bl: 41EU	13%	20%

Many other isolates appeared in a very low frequency. A formal evaluation process started in December 2025, considering not only the frequency of isolates, but also their geographic distribution and their potential to increase in importance. In April 2026, the IBEB-EU concluded that no distinctive new threats have emerged in the field. Consequently, no new Bremia races were denominated in 2026.

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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