

**2026 VIRTUAL
ANNUAL DIAGNOSTICS WORKSHOP
POTATO MOP TOP VIRUS (PMTV)**



Dr Vamsi Nalam
Dr Catia Delmiglio
Dr Alison Dann

Thursday 28 May
9am –10.30am (AEST)

Microsoft Teams virtual webinar

PROGRAM:

Dr Chantelle Girgan	Introduction & welcome	5 mins
Dr. Vamsi Nalam	<i>Decoupling Virus and Vector: A New Diagnostic Framework for PMTV and Spongospora subterranea,</i> followed by Q&A	25 mins
Dr Catia Delmiglio	<i>Overview of the 2018 PMTV response in New Zealand,</i> followed by Q&A	20 mins
Dr Alison Dann	<i>Video of PMTV emergency response Tasmania: potato tuber extraction protocol,</i> followed by Q&A	15 mins
Dr Chantelle Girgan	Closing remarks	



Dr. Vamsi Nalam is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Biology at Colorado State University and serves as Interim Director of the CSU Potato Breeding and Selection Program. His research focuses on plant–insect and plant–virus interactions, with an emphasis on mechanisms of plant defense and pest adaptation. Dr. Nalam leads research on vector-borne plant viruses and soilborne pathogens, including the development of tools such as infectious clone systems to improve disease screening and resistance discovery. His program combines basic and applied science, linking mechanistic insights with

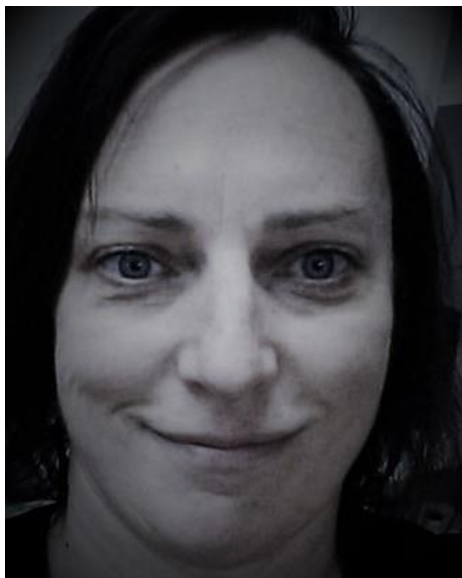
breeding strategies to develop resilient crop varieties, particularly in potato. In addition to his research, Dr. Nalam is actively engaged with growers, industry partners, and extension networks to translate scientific findings into practical solutions.



Dr Catia Delmiglio is a Principal Scientist in the Plant Virology Team at the Plant Health and Environment Laboratory (PHEL), the national plant pest reference laboratory of New Zealand, which is part of Biosecurity NZ at the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). Dr Delmiglio gained a PhD from the University of Auckland, understanding the role of New Zealand's native grasses as hosts of cereal and pasture viruses. She joined PHEL in 2008 as a scientist working on developing molecular detection methods, and has since broadened her skills and experience with a range of scientific and team-leadership roles across PHEL.

Through her 20 years' experience working in plant virology, she has gained skills in conducting field surveys; routine diagnostics of viruses, viroids, liberibacters and phytoplasmas; development of diagnostic techniques; representation in international fora and projects (e.g. QUADS, Euphresco); biosecurity preparedness; and response work including managing diagnostics for investigations and responses (e.g. the New Zealand response to PMTV in 2018).

Dr Delmiglio has also been involved in outreach programmes and mentoring (e.g. NZAid/EPBP in the Pacific, Inspiring the Future with schools), and she enjoys DJing and socialising in her spare time.



Dr Alison Dann has been a molecular plant pathologist for Biosecurity Tasmania (NRE Tasmania) for 13 years, working in a small laboratory with experience in dealing with all manner of pests and diseases, e.g. viruses, bacteria, fungi, phytoplasma, invertebrates, invasive species and even some animal welfare cases. She has a PhD in Microbial Ecology (UTAS) and a BSc in Science (JCU). Alison is currently the voting SPHD member for Tasmania and sits on a few working groups. Potato Mop Top Virus (PMTV) was recently found in Tasmania (first time for Australia) so having to devise a rapid and easy extraction protocol for potato tubers was essential. It was a very busy time but also very rewarding.