

Exponent®
Engineering & Scientific Consulting

Rob Sunley, Ph.D.

Office Director and Principal Scientist | Chemical Regulation and Food Safety
Harrogate
+44 (0) 1423 853240 | rsunley@exponent.com

Professional Profile

With a background in plant science research, Dr. Sunley has 20 years of broad ranging experience in EU regulatory affairs for plant protection products. He manages interdisciplinary projects in crop protection.

Dr. Sunley's regulatory affairs specialisms include EU active substance and product risk assessments; pesticide efficacy; minor uses (speciality crops); crop trial data extrapolation; EU pesticide literature reviews; EU Zonal Authorisation; Comparative Assessment; phytosanitary affairs, and general agronomy.

Dr. Sunley worked as a pesticide regulator for the UK national chemicals regulator, CRD (Chemicals Regulation Directorate). He conducted product level risk assessments and managed off-label approvals (extensions of authorisation) to support minor uses on specialist crops. On an international level, Dr Sunley has been involved with numerous technical panels in crop protection and phytosanitary affairs; prepared workshops; and contributed to international developments in crop protection with organizations including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Dr Sunley coordinated the development of numerous international standards for the efficacy evaluation of plant protection products while working at the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO) based in Paris. He also worked on the development of principles for efficacy data extrapolation for minor uses and continues to be a champion for specialty crops.

Academic Credentials & Professional Honors

Ph.D., Plant Science, University of Dundee, 2003

B.S., Biology, University of Stirling, Scotland, 1997

Prior Experience

Postdoctoral Researcher, Scottish Crop Research Institute, 2003-2005

Higher Scientific Officer, Pesticide Safety Directorate, 2005-2008

Scientific Officer, European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization, 2008-2012

Publications

Sunley R, et al. A decision support scheme that generates contingency plans and prioritizes action during pest outbreaks. Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin 2012; 42:1-5.

© 2026 Exponent, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Sunley R, Zlof V. Report of the EPPO Workshop on Zonal Efficacy Assessments (Berlin, DE, 2011-04-05/06). Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin 2011; 41:157-169.

Zlof V, Sunley R. Report of the EPPO Workshop on azole fungicides and Septoria leaf blotch control (Harpenden, GB, 2010-12-07/09). Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin 2011; 41:145-148.

Sunley RJ, van Opstal N. EPPO Workshop on comparative assessment in the framework of substitution: A summary of the conclusions and recommendations. Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin 2009; 40:101-104.

Sunley RJ. EPPO Workshop on Carrot Fly (Psila rosae): Integrated approaches for pest control. Bulletin OEPP/EPPO Bulletin 2009; 39:113-115.

van Opstal N, Sunley RJ. EPPO Workshop on eradication, containment and contingency planning. EPPO Bulletin 2009; 39:143-145.

Sunley RJ, Jones HG, Atkinson C. Chill unit models and recent changes in the occurrence of winter chill and spring frost in the United Kingdom. Journal of Horticultural Science and Biotechnology 2006; 81(6):949-958.

Jones HG, Sunley R, Brennan RM, Atkinson C. Fruit growing hots up for the future: Impacts of climate change on blackcurrant production. The Fruit Grower 2005 Mar; 28-30.

Atkinson CJ, Sunley RJ, Jones HG, Brennan R, Darby P. Winter chill in fruit. Defra report CTC 0206, 2004.

Sunley RJ, Parsons R. Alteration of glutamine synthetase and arginase activities in Lotus japonicus and the concomitant affects on nitrogen metabolism. In: Nitrogen Fixation: Global Perspectives. Finan TM et al. (eds), p. 448, CABI Publishing, Oxon, 2002.

Parsons R, Sunley RJ. Nitrogen nutrition and the role of root-shoot nitrogen signalling particularly in symbiotic systems. Journal of Experimental Botany 2001; 52 (Sp. Iss.):435-443.