

Psl-genotype isolates from different Finnish signal crayfish stocks show variation in their virulence but still kill fast



We detected significant virulence differences among five tested (Psl-Puujärvi, Psl-Pyhäjärvi, Psl-Kukkia, Psl-Saimaa I and Psl-Saimaa II) Psl-genotype crayfish plague (*Aphanomyces astaci*) isolates against lake Mikitänjärvi noble crayfish population. The crayfish were inoculated with a dose of 300 m-L-1A. *astaci* spores in ambient water under experimental conditions. Mortalities started from four to seven days after inoculation, depending on the Psl-genotype isolate. In all the experimentally infected groups it took no more than three days for all the crayfish to die after the first mortality. The Psl-Puujärvi isolate proved to be the most virulent strain, while Psl-Kukkia was the least virulent. The average day of death for these experimental groups was fifth and ninth day, respectively. We did not discover correlation between the average day of death and gender or level of additional *Psorospermium haeckeli* infestation. Our results show that there are, from the practical point of view, minor virulence differences among Psl-genotype A. *astaci* isolates, and that all the tested five isolates are highly virulent. The present results emphasize the necessity to prevent all further spread of highly virulent strains of A. *astaci* to aid and shelter successful conservations attempts of the native European

crayfishes.

Auteurs du document : J. Jussila, H. Kokko, R. Kortet, J. Makkonen

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