

## NEWS AND VIEWS

### IS P.K. 'X' RELATED TO SPHAEROSPORA?

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During the course of an investigation into Proliferative Kidney Disease (PKD) in rainbow trout *Salmo gairdneri* Richardson, an antiserum was produced against P.K. 'X', the likely aetiological agent of PKD (Rafferty 1986, thesis). P.K. 'X' cells isolated from infected kidney tissue and concentrated using discontinuous density gradients of Percoll, were used as the inoculum in New Zealand white rabbits. The antiserum was isolated, and adsorbed by cell column chromatography to remove unwanted antitritout immunoglobulin, and the specificity was demonstrated using the indirect immuno-fluorescent test (IFT) screening PKD-infected tissue (in preparation).

The biology and taxonomy of P.K. 'X', remain unresolved. Comparisons have been made between typical P.K. 'X' and the myxozoan parasite *Sphaerospora renicola*. Tissues from brown trout heavily infected

with *S. renicola* were kindly made available by Professor Rudolph Hoffman. These tissues, including kidney, spleen, liver, gill, heart, gut and skin, were then screened using the anti-P.K. 'X' serum by the IFT method. No recognition of *S. renicola* by the anti-P.K. 'X' serum was displayed. This result would seem to cast doubt on the possibility of a close link between P.K. 'X' and *Sphaerospora renicola*.

#### References

- Rafferty, M.D. 1986. A study of Proliferative Kidney Disease in Rainbow trout *Salmo gairdneri* Richardson, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, National University of Ireland.

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#### Summary

An antiserum against P.K. 'X', did not react with *Sphaerospora renicola*. This throws doubt on the suggestion that P.K. 'X' might be related to *Sphaerospora*.