

DRHS Issues a Challenge to Members and Local Societies: Hosta Virus X – Phase II

The American Hosta Society VP for Genus Hosta, Rob Mortko, recently sent a [letter](#) to all local and regional societies asking for assistance in funding Phase II of the Hosta Virus X study.

As you may know, the AHS commissioned a 2-year study to look into this non-fatal hosta disease. The study wrapped up in 2009, and the results, as might be expected, raised more questions than were answered. The AHS has prepared an informational brochure, which can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Phase II of the study will look further into the means of transmission, focusing whether the virus can remain active in the soil following the removal of an infected plant., as well as looking at methods to prevent transmission via tools, etc.

The Board of Directors of DRHS voted at our 2010 meeting to issue the following challenge to our members:

- Donations by individual members to DRHS will be matched dollar for dollar up to a limit of \$500.
- Donations by local societies within the Dixie Region will be matched at 25%, up to a limit of \$500.

The Board feels that it is important for our group to support the vision of AHS in continuing the funding of Phase II. The DRHS donated \$1000 in 2006 toward Phase I. By challenging our members and locals, we hope that not only will we raise the maximum amount of money that we are able, but that we will also raise the awareness about this problem by our members.

The most important thing to remember is DO NOT PANIC if you do find this disease in your hosta plantings. Phase I showed that it is difficult to infect a plant, even on purpose, so by following a few simple steps, you can minimize your exposure.

1) Learn to recognize the symptoms of Hosta Virus X and be watchful for infestations. Go to <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/HostaVirusX.html> for more information and to <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/PDF/HostaViruses.pdf> to see photos of infected leaves.

2) Buy hostas only from reputable hosta vendors who are familiar with the virus and who buy from wholesalers who test (index) their stock.

3) Be cautious about “tool hygiene,” especially when the hosta are actively growing in the spring, when the disease seems to be more infective. The AHS brochure details the process to use to sanitize your tools.

4) Enjoy your hosta!

5) Donate to DRHS and AHS to help find a means to eliminate the virus from the trade!

In order to have the funding in place for next year, we need to have your donations prior to **November 1, 2010**, so please act today!

To have your donation matched by DRHS, you must make your checks payable to:
American Hosta Society and earmark the check HVX Research and mail to:

Judy Burns,
DRHS Regional Director,
3070 Hudson Way,
Decatur, GA 30033.

January 2011 Update: Thanks to our generous donors, a grand total of \$3375 has been sent to AHS!

Donations have been forwarded to AHS and will be applied toward the \$40,000 needed to proceed with the project. If your club was not aware of this program and would like to put us over the top with a donation of \$100, please send your donation to: Judy Burns, Regional Director, 3070 Hudson Way, Decatur, GA 30033. We will match your donation at the 25% and forward it to AHS.