

Gaming with genes for the sake of a tree

The public are being asked to help in the fight against ash dieback by playing a computer game that analyses genetic data on the disease.

The Facebook game aims to use the power of social media to find a scientific solution to protecting ash trees from the *Chalara fraxinea* fungus.

Many of the UK's 80m ash trees are threatened by ash dieback.

Scientists believe some trees may have natural immunity to *Chalara* and could be used to grow resistant forests.

The Fraxinus game, launched to the public on Tuesday, challenges players to match sequences of genetic "letters" represented by coloured leaf shapes.

This sorts genetic information into matching sequences and pinpoints genetic variation in the tree or the fungus.

Experts hope it will give clues to the origins of the disease, and help identify the best ash trees to grow in the future.

Read the full, original story here: [Computer game added to armoury in ash dieback fight](#)

Additional Resources:

- "[Chalara ash dieback outbreak: Q&A](#)," BBC News
- "[Like-Minded Rivals Race to Bring Back the Chestnut Tree](#)," New York Times