

THE GREAT IRISH FAMINE: 1845-1849

The Irish population had exploded to 8.5 million in 1845

The peasants was almost totally dependent on potatoes as their main source of food



A disease of potato, called blight, struck Ireland; turning potatoes into a soggy and inedible mess

Almost 2 million Irish was killed and 1.5 million emigrated

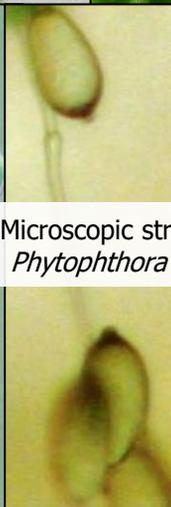
The blight destroyed the potato crop of 1845 and it was clear that famine was imminent in Ireland

By 1851 the Irish population was 1 million

THE CAUSAL AGENT OF POTATO BLIGHT: *Phytophthora infestans*



Symptoms on leaves and stems of potato plants



Microscopic structures of *Phytophthora infestans*

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