

Fall 2008 Strawberry Disease Observations and Recommendations.
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The fall has been a challenge for many growers, here in the South and for many of our nursery suppliers. In particular, excess rains have delayed fumigation and also provide a climate for the build-up of diseases. What are we seeing and what should growers consider?

PHYTOPHTHORA CROWN ROT, caused by *Phytophthora cactorum*, has become a recurrent, though not common problem in our industry. With the heavy rains experienced by some of our plant suppliers and wet soil conditions in many of our fields, growers should consider the use of Ridomil Gold in their planting beds. The label allows for the “first application after transplanting”. It should not be used on plug plants prior to planting, as a dip, or in the transplant solution as these are not labeled uses and can cause plant stunting – in our experience. Use 1 pt per treated acre (NOTE: Only half of an acre of strawberries is actually under plastic meaning 1 acre of land has 0.5 acres of treated area). It is best to apply Ridomil Gold after the time of excess watering and when the plants have taken a root-hold – approximately 2 weeks after transplanting. Ridomil Gold is best applied through the drip irrigation system. Ridomil Gold is much more effective than the phosphorous acid generators (e.g. Aliette, Prophyt, Phostrol etc) for managing Phytophthora. The phosphorous acid generators are helpful in specific circumstances where Ridomil cannot be applied or when strawberry roots are severely damaged and a foliar spray of a product is the best option.

Manage fields to prevent standing water and saturated soils by channeling excess surface water to headlands and waterways.

In the past we have occasionally encountered Phytophthora problems in the plug production phase. This is a unique circumstance and treatment of plugs requires a different strategy. Contact your local extension office to get a sure diagnosis if plug problems are encountered.

For more information on Phytophthora problems and management see:
<http://www.smallfruits.org/SmallFruitsRegGuide/Guides/2008/08StrawberryIntegMgmtGuideDec10.pdf>
http://www.smallfruits.org/SRSFC_News/Phytophthora0404.pdf
<http://www.smallfruits.org/Newsletter/Vol8-Issue4.pdf>

ANTHRACNOSE: We are not aware of any widespread problems with anthracnose at this time. Therefore, our recommendations are that growers should save their QoI fungicides (Abound, Cabrio and Pristine) for a spring program. If you are aware of a problem on your plants, then a specific management program can be developed on an as-needed basis. We are doing some lab research that may modify our spring fungicide recommendations...stay tuned.

ANGULAR LEAF SPOT: Some incoming bare root plants have been diagnosed with angular leaf spot. Overall, this disease does not present a devastating effect. Yields are rarely affected. If frost protection is needed multiple times in the spring, and if we have a cool wet spring, then this disease can become an economic problem. Plant stunting and plant collapse may occur and as fruit mature, the calyx may get black triangular lesions. These black lesions make the berries look ugly and can affect retail sales. No products have shown benefit on a consistent basis and therefore recommendations for bactericidal sprays are not possible. Copper sprays may be useful in the spring and recommendations will be developed as the year progresses.