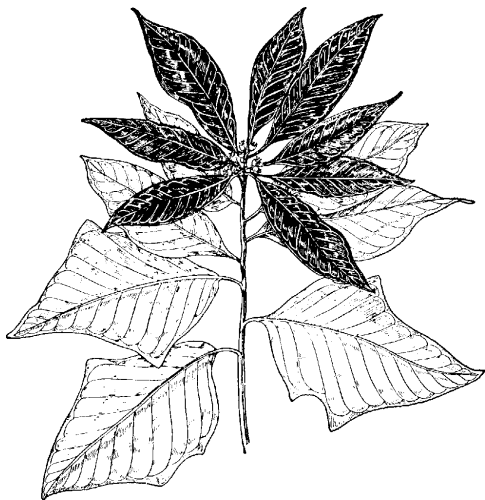


# PLANT & PEST ADVISORY

LANDSCAPE, NURSERY & TURF EDITION \$1.50

NOVEMBER 9, 2000



## Powdery Mildew and Scab of Poinsettia

*Margery Daughtrey, Ph.D., Plant Pathology, Long Island Horticultural Research Laboratory, Cornell University and Ann B. Gould, Ph.D., Ornamentals Plant Pathology*

In recent years, powdery mildew of poinsettia has been troublesome in greenhouses in the Northeast. So far this season, this disease has been reported in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ontario and New Brunswick, Canada greenhouses on Freedom, Cortez, Spotlight Red, and Red Velvet cultivars. It's time for greenhouse growers to check their poinsettia crops for powdery mildew now!

Scout for initial symptoms that appear as yellow leaf spots – crop monitoring and early detection are essential for management of this disease. As the powdery mildew progresses, white fungal growth, sometimes confused with spray residue, becomes evident on leaves and bracts. Powdery mildew spores are easily dispersed throughout greenhouses on air currents. To minimize spread, remove affected tissue by slicing petioles and gently placing the tissue into plastic bags with minimal disturbance. Severely affected plants serve as a source of high level of inoculum and should be removed.

Once symptoms are evident, spray the entire crop with a labeled fungicide at 14-day intervals. Keep in mind that visible colonies won't disappear after treatment. Apply fungicides to plants with powdery mildew early in the day. Aim for good drying conditions to avoid the possibility of injury to bracts—even water sitting on immature bracts will cause injury, so discourage late-in-the-day applications.

Of the fungicides labeled for control, Systhane (not for use in New York) is an excellent choice. It may be used at a 14-day interval at 4 oz/100 gal. The residue is very low with this material. Two other excellent materials are Terraguard (8 oz/100 gal at a 14-day interval) and Strike (4 oz/100 gal at a 14-day interval). When any of these compounds is used on a 14-day interval, poinsettias remain almost perfectly free of powdery mildew even in research trials where inoculum source plants are covered with spores. Based on research results over the past 7 years, these three compounds are most dependable in terms of efficacy, low residue, and low potential for

SEE POINSETTIA ON PAGE 2

## INSIDE

**Powdery Mildew and Scab of Poinsettia** ..... 1

**Plant Diagnostic Lab Highlights** ..... 2

**Business Seminar for the Landscape Industry** ..... 3

**Rethinking Crabgrass/Goosegrass Management Strategies** ..... 3

phytotoxicity. To minimize possibilities for fungicide resistance, Cygnus (kresoxim-methyl) may be included in a fungicide rotation.

Other materials labeled for powdery mildew on poinsettia include AQ10, Benefit, hydrogen dioxide, kresoxim-methyl, Phyton 27, piperalin, potassium bicarbonate, Spectro, thiophanate-methyl, and trifloxystrobin. Refer to the label for proper timing, rates, and cautions.

At this point in the growing season, the danger period for poinsettia scab caused by *Sphaceloma poinsettiae* is just about over. Growers should not see disease spread due to the absence of splashing water in the finishing stages of most poinsettia crops, combined with all the disease-suppressive effects of the fungicides that they may have used over the past couple of months. At this stage in the crop, poinsettia scab probably no longer merits fungicide application, whereas if powdery mildew is detected in poinsettias, fungicide treatment is very important. □

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**Editor's Note: This is the last issue of the Landscape, Nursery & Turf edition of the Plant & Pest Advisory for the 2000 season. Thank you for subscribing.**

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## Plant Diagnostic Laboratory Highlights

*Richard Buckley, Plant Diagnostic Laboratory Coordinator*

### Turfgrass

There has not been a lot of disease activity on the turf scene since our last report. Several samples of dollar spot were submitted to the laboratory in mid-October and a couple lingering anthracnose problems are all that we have seen. Besides the normal seasonal slow down that we get at this time of year, it has been very dry in October. We certainly have had temperatures conducive to the cool season diseases, like pink snow mold and yellow patch, but without rain can't seem to get the fungi in gear!

### Landscape

Things are a little more active in the landscape at this point. Several more oak samples tested positive for Bacterial leaf scorch. Most of the samples were from Mercer County with one from Bergen. Sphaeropsis tip blight was diagnosed on samples of Austrian pine from Mercer and Ocean Counties. Botryosphaeria canker was evident on Norway maple branches from Monmouth County. A huge population of eriophyid mites was identified on white pine branches sent from Somerset County.

### Greenhouse and Nursery

Over the last several weeks we received a number of poinsettia samples from different growers around the state. These plants were diagnosed with powdery mildew. Disease activity varied among cultivars with "New Freedom" apparently the most susceptible. We also had a sample diagnosed with a crown and root rot, caused by the fungus *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*. *Sclerotinia* makes abundant mycelium and is quite spectacular – a very cool disease!

In the nursery, Phytophthora root and crown rot reared its ugly head. Samples of juniper from a Union County grower had the disease and samples of forsythia from Cumberland County did as well. □

## Business Seminar for the Landscape Industry

The Annual South Jersey Landscape Conference and Trade Show will be held on Wednesday, December 6, 2000 at Masso's Crystal Manor on Delsea Drive (Rt. 47) in Glassboro, NJ.

This year the featured speaker will be Mr. Kevin Kehoe, a landscape business consultant from Laguna Niguel, California. Mr. Kehoe will share his extensive experience by presenting a seminar on "How to Build a Sure Fire Business Strategy" during the morning session of the all day program. To kick off the afternoon session of the program, he will discuss "How to Sell Your Services and Make a Profit."

Once again, the conference will feature a panel of landscape business professionals. This year's diversified group of men and women will discuss successful ideas from their business. The panel, moderated by Agricultural Agent, Jerome L. Frecon of Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, will kick off the program on Wednesday morning.

Back by popular demand, Ms. Debbie Smith-Fiola, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Ocean County, will present a well-illustrated seminar of "Predicting Pests and Problems in the Landscape".

Because a great number of trees and shrubs are still showing symptoms from the drought in 1999, Dr. Ann Gould, Specialist in Ornamental Plant Pathology with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, will discuss "The Effect of Drought and Environmental Stress in the Landscape Planting".

Winding up the day-long program will be Ms. Pat Hastings, who will discuss "Protective Clothing and Equipment needed by the Pest Control Applicator Working in Landscape Plantings".

New Jersey certified nursery and landscape professionals who attend the conference will receive 5 credits in various categories. New Jersey certified pesticide applicators will receive 3 units in 5 different categories and one CORE unit.

In addition to the full day program, a trade show will be run concurrently. Attendees will also have the opportunity to visit 10-15 different vendors of landscape products and services.

The conference is sponsored by Rutgers Cooperative Extension in cooperation with the New Jersey Nursery and Landscape Association – South Chapter. A registration fee will be charged. For information contact Jerome L. Frecon, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Gloucester County, at 856-307-6450 or by fax at 856-881-4191. Mr. Frecon can also be reached by e-mail at [gloucester@aesop.rutgers.edu](mailto:gloucester@aesop.rutgers.edu). A full copy of the program is on the web site at [www.co.gloucester.nj.us](http://www.co.gloucester.nj.us).

Trade show participation is available from the NJNLA by calling 609-291-7070. □

## Rethinking Crabgrass/Goosegrass Management Strategies

*Stephen Hart, Ph.D., Weed Science*

As the winter buying season for turfgrass management inputs such as herbicides approaches, it is a good time to review the past season to reevaluate our management practices. One of the largest herbicide inputs for turfgrass are preemergence herbicides used for crabgrass and goosegrass control.

Our current recommendations suggest that these herbicides should be applied prior to April 10 in southern New Jersey and prior to April 20 in central/northern New Jersey. On turfgrass sites that are well maintained with low levels of these weeds, a single application of these herbicides should provide season-long control. However, over the past two years I have noticed that the germination cycle for these two weeds has been extended long into the summer season, with crabgrass germinating well into August and goosegrass into September. Thus single applications of these herbicides in April often do not provide season long control of these weeds.

If you have made similar observations on some of your sites, one management strategy to consider is a sequential application of these herbicides 6 to 8 weeks apart. As an example, say you plan to apply a crabgrass/goosegrass control product containing the active ingredient pendemethalin at 2.0 to 3.0 pounds of active ingredient per acre. You may want to consider an April application at 1.0 to 1.5 pounds of active ingredient followed by a second application in late May/early June of another 1.0 to 1.5 pounds. Although this will increase labor inputs, a sequential application will help insure that crabgrass and goosegrass will be controlled into the summer, eliminating the possible need for a postemergence herbicide application. □

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