

BANANA FRECKLE



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"Adoption of Control Strategies and Rehabilitation of Areas
Affected by Banana Bunchy Top."



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BANANA FRECKLE

I. Introduction

Banana freckle is caused by a fungus, Phyllostictina musarum (Cooke) Petr. It is commonly found on the older leaves of susceptible cultivar. Sometimes, it is called blackspot because of the numerous black spots formed by the pycnidia of the fungus. 'Lakatan', 'Latundan', 'Cavendish', and 'Saba' or 'Cardaba' are susceptible while 'Senorita' is resistant.

II. Infection

The pycnidia of the fungus infect the upper leaf surfaces. Heavy infestation can affect even the fruits and sword sucker leaves. Pycnidia are carried by wind and water.

III. Symptom

Its symptom consists of numerous rough, black spots about 1 mm in diameter formed in the midrib and lamina of the older leaves. The spots may coalesce to form large blackened areas on upper leaves

which can result in serious defoliation. Freckles may also be present in the transition leaves and bracts. Infected fruits are full of blemishes which lessen their quality.

IV. Control Measure

- A. Space bananas according to the recommended population per unit area in relation to the variety to avoid overlapping of leaf canopy that would create a favorable micro-climate for disease development.
- B. Remove infected leaves to prevent faster spread of the disease. Cut whole leaf when 75% entire leaf is spotted, 50% or less infection must be trimmed to removed spotted areas. Deleafing should not be overdone.
- C. Provide drainage canals to avoid waterlogging which triggers high humidity favorable for disease development.
- D. Maintain proper plant nutrition.

- E. Institute a planned chemical control program. For small farmers, apply fungicidal spray at the rate of 100 li/ha with either Dithane M-45 at 3-5 g/li, Daconil at 2 g/li, or Benlate at 1-2 g/li water at an interval of 14-21 days. Proper and adequate shaking of the spray solution must be maintained to avoid phytotoxicity on banana leaves and fruits.

V. References

- Magnaye, L.V. 1994. Pests and diseases. ASAP-USAID. 6 p.
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