

# Roses need protection from black spot disease

NEWARK, Del. — Black spot disease is now making its annual appearance on roses which haven't been protected by spraying, warns University of Delaware Extension plant pathologist Bob Mulrooney. This disease is one of the most troublesome to afflict

roses grown in Delaware. It's caused by a fungus which lives from year to year on dead fallen leaves and stems. Every Spring it produces spores which infect new foliage to start the destructive cycle all over again.

Symptoms of the disease appear as nearly round black spots on leaves of untreated rose plants. Spots vary in size but may get as large as a half inch in diameter. They have a fringed border and several may run together to form large irregular black areas on a single leaf. Usually infected leaves will turn yellow and drop prematurely. This leaf loss reduces the vigor of plants and makes them more subject to other diseases, drought, insects, and winter injury.

Sanitation is a very important part of controlling black spot, says Mulrooney. Cut canes of diseased plants back as severely as possible, and rake and destroy all leaves at the end of the growing season.

Rose varieties vary greatly in their resistance. Control is most effective if a protective fungicide is applied before the condition appears or becomes established. (See the end of this article for recommended chemical controls for both black spot and powdery mildew.)

Powdery mildew is a fungus which first appears on young leaves as a grayish-white, powdery growth. Such leaves appear to have been dusted with talcum, and will become twisted and deformed. The disease later spreads to older leaves as well.

When severe, powdery mildew causes stunting and distortion of leaves, stems and buds. Buds may not open at all, and tops of canes are killed. The disease is usually more severe on succulent growth brought about by excessive use of nitrogen fertilizer, cautions the plant pathologist. Control depends on early, preventive treatment. As in the case of black spot, some rose varieties are more resistant to this disease than others.

To prevent black spot and powdery mildew from attacking your roses, spray plants with one of the following combinations of chemicals:  
 1 1/2 tablespoons of maneb plus 1/2 teaspoon of dinocap in a gallon of water; or  
 1 1/2 tablespoons of folpet per gallon of water; or  
 1 1/2 tablespoons of

chlorothalonil plus 1/2 teaspoon of dinocap per gallon of water.

Start spraying any of the above combinations at bud-break and repeat at seven- to 10-day intervals until frost, recommends Mulrooney.

It is also possible to treat at 10- to 14-day intervals with a combination of 1 1/2 teaspoons of benomyl in combination with 1 1/2 tablespoons of either folpet, chlorothalonil, or Fore (zinc ion maneb) mixed in a gallon of water.

For best results, shorten the intervals between sprays during rainy or humid weather. Ideally sprays should have been started in mid-May, but your roses will still benefit from treatment if you start right now.

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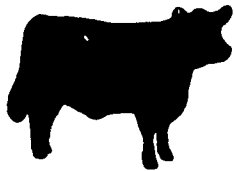
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