



Greenhouse Pest Message, Sept 22, 2023
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With the humid weather this fall, aerial web blight caused by **Rhizoctonia web blight** may occur. *Rhizoctonia* is more commonly known to cause stem rots, cutting rots, root rots and damping off. During warm and humid conditions, *Rhizoctonia solani* can grow over plants causing an aerial web blight. This summer with the tropical-like rainfall and humid weather combined with dense crop canopies late in garden mum production, favors aerial web blight. Web blight occurs very quickly, causes stems, and leaves to collapse.

If you look closely, you may see the fine, web-like strands of the fungus (mycelium) present. Dead leaves remained attached to the stem.



Figure 1 & 2: Fine, web-like fungal strands characteristic of *Rhizoctonia*. Photo by L. Pundt



Figure 3 & 4: Damage from aerial web blight on garden mums. Photos by L. Pundt

Damage may be confused with Botrytis blight; however, you do not see the characteristic fuzzy gray mold or spore masses of Botrytis blight.

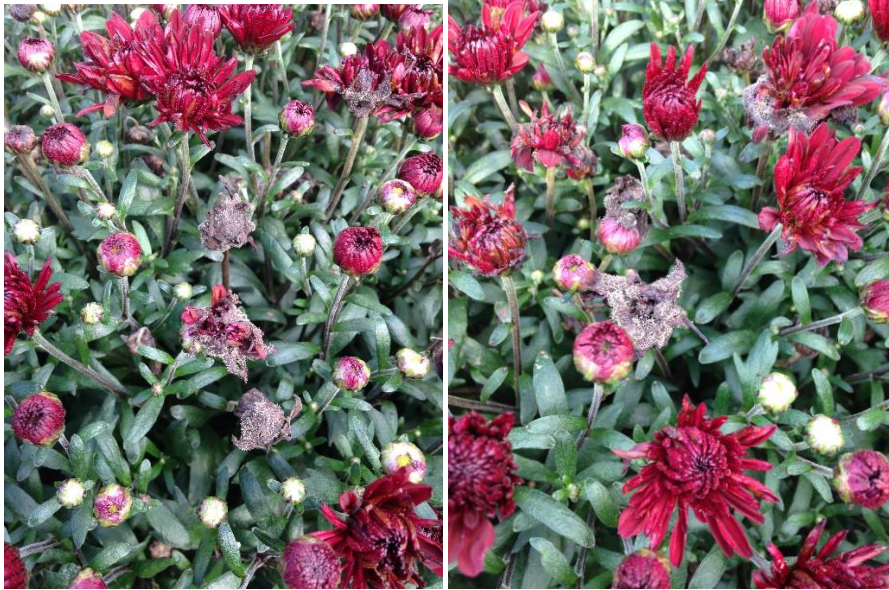


Figure 5 & 6: *Botrytis* spore masses on garden mum flowers. Photo by L. Pundt

As you continue to empty your mum fields, the increased spacing will help. Reducing fertilizer also helps, as you do not want to promote lush, succulent growth.

If damage has occurred to more than a few plants, you may consider fungicide treatments. Because *Botrytis* blight is a saprophyte that can develop on dead tissue, it is a good idea to select fungicides that are effective against both *Rhizoctonia* web blight and *Botrytis* Blight. Some options may include: Affirm (polyoxin D salt (FRAC 17)), Medallion or Spirato ((fludioxonil (FRAC 12)), Mural (azoxystrobin & benzovindiflupyr (FRAC 11 & &7)), Palladium (cyprodinil & fludioxonil)(FRAC 9 & FRAC 12).

Clean up and sanitize outdoor production yards at the end of the season.

For more: Tips to Minimize Late-Stage Foliar Disease Pressure in Garden Mums by R. Yates <https://www.greenhousegrower.com/production/tips-to-minimize-late-stage-foliar-disease-pressure-in-garden-mums/>

Due to the recent September summer heat week, some of mum varieties may have flowered ahead of schedule and others may have suffered from heat delay. As you know, it's best to sell garden mums right out of the field, but if needed, they can be stored for up to 2 weeks. Irrigate with clear water for the last two weeks of production, and water well prior to storage. Maintain a storage temperature of 35 to 40F in your cooler.

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