**Integrated Pest Management Program**
Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
UConn Extension

**Greenhouse Pest Message, July 19, 2024**
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**Mold on Growing Media**
With the hot, humid weather, I have noticed some saprophytic molds on surface of growing media. As these molds are saprophytic, they only feed on dead plant debris and are not harmful to plants or their roots. They are involved in the decay of organic matter and are more likely to occur when the growing media remains wet for prolonged periods of time.

If severe, a layer or crust can form, which could limit water penetration (just like algae does). If you notice a crust starting to form, you can scrape off the mold or even carefully vacuum it off the growing media surface.

For more: **Presence of Mold on Growing Media by Susan Parent:**
https://www.pthorticulture.com/en-us/training-center/presence-of-mold-on-growing-media

**Poinsettias**
For those of you growing poinsettias, here are some **online resource**s to help you your monitoring efforts.
Whiteflies can be a primary pest depending upon how clean the cuttings are when they arrive.

Placing sticky cards in the crop helps you detect any winged adult whiteflies.
See**: Identifying Some Pests on Sticky Cards in Greenhouses**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofJ8fPBqBF0

Identificaion de algunas plagas en arjetas adhesivas en invernaderos
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q_XhWv2ijNE

Don't forget to supplement your sticky card counts with foliar and root inspections.
*See:* ***Tips on Scouting Poinsettia Insect and Mite Pests***
https://ipm-cahnr.media.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3216/2022/12/01Tips-on-Scouting-Poinsettia-Pestsfinal2017-2.pdf

**Using Biological Controls on Poinsettias**
Canadian researchers also have developed a presence/absence sampling plan for their growers using biological controls. Check 15 to 20 plants per block or bench, for at least ½ of the blocks in your greenhouses. Look on the underside of as many leaves as possible, holding plants above your head, and rate the entire plant as **with whitefly or without whiteflies. (Yes or No).**

Add up the number of infested plants and divide this by the total number of plants sampled to determine the % of infested plants. It's helpful to break this down by the varieties you grow. Often, white, variegated, or pink varieties tend to be more infested with whiteflies. They have light colored foliage which seems to be more attractive to the whiteflies than the darker foliage common with the red varieties grown today.

Canadian consultants use the general rule of thumb, that if fewer than 20% of your plants are infested with whiteflies by **mid-September**, you can continue using biological controls, but if more than 20% are infested, and it's the main variety you grow, spot treatments with compatible insecticides will be needed.

For more: **The Tipping Point for Whitefly Control in Poinsettia**
https://onfloriculture.com/2018/09/25/the-tipping-point-for-whitefly-control-in-poinsettia/

**On Floriculture Blog** The Latest on Floriculture IPM Information
https://onfloriculture.com/tag/onfloriculture-blog/
Is an excellent resource especially for those of you using biological controls.
Sign up to subscribe to this excellent blog and receive notifications of new posts by email:

**How to Video of the week: Checking the Quality of Parasitic Wasps**
https://onfloriculture.com/2024/07/15/how-to-video-of-the-week-checking-the-quality-of-parasitic-biocontrols/

**Monitoring for Whitefly in Poinsettia Crops** https://onfloriculture.com/ipm-how-to-videos/#monitoring-for-whitefly-in-poinsettia-crops

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