

Greenhouse Pest Message, October 7, 2024
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With recent cooler temperatures, *Botrytis* blight has appeared in greenhouses.

Leaf spots and blighting caused by *Botrytis cinerea* have been observed in several greenhouses. As temperatures start to drop, be on the lookout for this pathogen. *Botrytis* produces large masses of spores (gray mold) that can be carried by air currents to neighboring plants in the greenhouse. The spores can be produced on blighted plants or leaves and petals on the greenhouse bench or floor. Often times, dead leaves that are covered by “spores” are actually *Botrytis*. Infections can start as small spots on the leaves and petals that increase in size rapidly when conditions are favorable.

Environmental conditions are a major factor in the success of *Botrytis*. When temperatures are cool and moisture is high, the pathogen can spread rapidly and produce large quantities of spores. This can occur in the greenhouse when temperatures drop in the evening and there is high humidity. One way to control *Botrytis* is to keep the greenhouse dry and limit condensation, using fans and forced hot air under benches. Appropriate plant spacing and avoiding pooling water on flood floors is helpful in reducing relative humidity around the plants. Puddles in the greenhouse can result in high localized relative humidity. Minimize *Botrytis* by watering in the morning, and scout cuttings that are under regular mist so the pathogen doesn't become established.

There are many flowers that are affected by this pathogen that include: geranium, celosia, poinsettia, primula, viola, gerbera, hydrangea, ornamental pepper, and others. When the early stages of *Botrytis* are noticed, it is time to start a spray program. The top fungicides are listed in Table 1 below. The tier 1 fungicides consistently provide good control in university trials. Be sure to rotate among FRAC groups to reduce the chances of resistance development, as this pathogen can rapidly develop resistance to commonly used fungicides. Teir 1.5 fungicides can be used when disease pressure is moderate and still provide control.



Photos by N. Rehcigl and C. Krasnow

Table 1: Fungicides labeled for *Botrytis* control in the greenhouse

	Product	Active ingredient	FRAC code
Tier 1	Decree	Fenhexamid	17
	Mural	Azoxystrobin+Benzovindiflupyr	11/7
	Switch 62.5WG	Cyprodinil+Fludioxonil	9/12
	Empress	Pyraclostrobin	11
	Astun	Isofetamid	7
	Postiva	Pydiflumetofen+Difenoconazole	3/7
	Pageant Intrinsic	Pyraclostrobin/boscalid	11/7
Tier 1.5	Heritage	Azoxystrobin	11
	Scala SC	Pyrimethanil	9
	Daconil	Chlorothalonil	M5
	3336	Thiophanate-methyl	1
	Compass O	Trifloxystrobin	11

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