

STRAWBERRY DISEASE FAST FACTS

LEAF SPOTS



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FOLIAR DISEASES: [LEAF SPOT](#), [LEAF SCORCH](#), [LEAF BLIGHT](#)

What: fungal diseases causing leaf spots on strawberry.

Spot: *Mycosphaerella fragariae*, **Scorch:** *Diplocarpon earlianum*, **Blight:** *Phomopsis obscurans*

When: These diseases may occur sporadically during the growing season, when disease conditions are favorable for infection.

Spot: Spot symptoms are most commonly seen in mid to late spring, just prior to harvest.

Scorch: Symptoms appear on leaves of initial spring re-growth. The disease may intensify from late spring to mid-fall.

Blight: Infections typically occur early in the season, but often remain latent until warmer weather. Symptoms most often appear at renovation or late summer to early fall. Note Blight does not readily infect fruit caps.

Where:

All 3 diseases typically appear first as small purple spots (lesions) on leaves. They are easier to distinguish as lesions age. These fungi may also infect leaf stems, stolons, flower parts, fruit, and fruit caps.

Spot: Leaf spots typically have a light brown to gray to whitish center bordered by a thin reddish purple margin. Fruit infections occur around seeds- a condition known as "Black-seed".

Scorch: large purple to reddish to yellow patches dotted with purple lesions. Note the centers of these lesions do not become white, brown, or gray, as with Leaf spot or Leaf blight. As the disease progresses the leaves brown, wither and curl, becoming "scorched" in appearance.

Blight: Large, nearly circular spots with wide reddish purple margins and brown centers. Lesions from the leaf margin may also be V-shaped. *Phomopsis* soft rot of fruit has recently been reported from various locations in the US.

How:

Conidia of all 3 pathogens are spread primarily by splashing water-rain, dew, and irrigation. Infection periods for these fungi are favored by 12+ hrs leaf wetness, temperatures between 15-25 °C. Scorch is favored by slightly cooler temperatures than Spot or Blight.

What to do:

Plant in light, well-drained soil with good air circulation and exposure.

Choose disease resistant cultivars suitable for your location ([Appendix of Strawberry Cultivar Disease Resistance](#)).

Plant only disease free plants purchased from reliable nurseries.

Apply nitrogen fertilizers only at renovation to reduce succulent new leaf tissue that is more susceptible.

Carefully space runner plants in matted-row culture and control weeds in all plantings to improve air circulation and reduce drying time for leaves.

Remove older or infected leaves before setting runners in new plantings.

Removing and burning/burying all debris at renovation (after harvest) helps to reduce overwintering inoculum of leaf pathogens.

If leaf diseases are a problem in the planting, follow a fungicide spray schedule recommended for control of leaf diseases and fruit rots to aid in control.

Thoroughly cover all above ground plant parts with spray, especially undersides of leaves.

For more information: [Pest Management Guidelines for Berry Crops](#), [NYBN Vol. 3, No. 4](#), [NYBN Vol. 2, No. 5](#), [NYBN Vol. 1, No. 4](#),

Leaf Spot



Leaf Scorch



Leaf Blight

