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Azalea: Root rot (Phytophthora)

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.

Biology

The symptoms produced by Phytophthora root rot are often confused with those caused by environmental or cultural problems. Above ground, infected plants may show stunting, yellowish-green leaves, branch dieback, wilt, and even plant death. Dead leaves persist on the branches instead of dropping. Underground, the roots rot, progressing from the smallest to the largest. The fungus may also cause rot in the main stem. Phytophthora persists in the soil and can infect new plants placed in the same area. Diseased plant tissues and debris are other sources of infection.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Choose the right plant for the location and provide good cultural care. A healthy plant is more resistant to disease.
- ~ Plant only disease-free materials.
- ~ Remove and destroy all infected plants to prevent spread of the disease.
- ~ Select resistant azalea species such as *R. poukhanense* or resistant cultivars such as 'Formosa', 'Fakir', 'Corrine Murrah', 'Merlin', or 'Hampton Beauty' for planting in infected areas.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

None recommended

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Images



*~ Caption: Phytophthora root rot infecting trunk
~ Photo by: R.S. Byther*