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Strawberry: Red stele

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

Biology

Red stele is caused by a soil-infesting fungus. It is active in cool, wet weather. It attacks roots soon after fall rains begin and remains active through winter, spreading most rapidly where drainage is poor or in heavier soils. The core or stele of diseased roots has a reddish-pink tinge which gradually turns cinnamon-brown and finally black. The root's outer cortex stays white. Lateral roots are quickly destroyed, giving main roots a "rat tail" appearance. Slightly diseased plants show few above-ground symptoms. Severely diseased plants are stunted, foliage may turn bluish-green and eventually plants wilt and die.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Use certified strawberry plants.
- ~ Set new plants in well-drained soil that does not have a history of red stele disease.
- ~ Plant on beds raised 15 inches to improve drainage.
- ~ Select resistant cultivars such as 'Olympus', 'Hood', 'Totem', 'Rainier', and 'Shuksan'.

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: Strawberry roots showing discolored stele

~ Photo by: R.S. Byther