

Myrtaceae Plant Inspection Protocol

Myrtle rust spores are highly mobile. Like many rusts, they are easily spread across large distances by wind. They can also be transported by infected plant material, on clothing, equipment and vehicles, by insects and in rain splashes

Early detection gives us the best chance of containing an incursion

Preparation

1. Wear disposable overalls and gloves, and washable footwear.
2. Carry a camera and mobile phone.
3. Carry several large plastic bags and have a hand-pump of disinfectant nearby (example sodium hypochlorite) – see decontamination below.

Crop inspection

1. Walk at random through each block or bench area containing Myrtaceae plants in a zigzag pattern.
2. Inspect 20-30 plants in containers or 10-15 tube/plug trays per 100m² of production or display area.
3. Inspect the tops and bottoms of leaves/stems/buds/fruit looking for any direct evidence of the disease.
4. Inspect the entire above-ground area of the plants.
5. With larger plants, select leaves from all parts of the plant (upper, middle, lower) and examine them individually.

If you find anything suspicious

1. Do not move any plants from your site.
2. Take photos of the suspected myrtle rust and the whole plant.
3. Do not attempt to touch or collect samples as this may increase the spread of this disease.
4. If possible, isolate the plants with an igloo-hoop-like plastic cover.
5. **Call MPI's exotic pests and diseases hotline on 0800 80 99 66.**

Decontamination

1. If you become contaminated you'll need to decontaminate yourself as best you can.
2. Remove outer clothing (hence the disposable overalls), place the garments in a plastic bag, and leave it on the spot.
3. Spray and clean footwear with a disinfectant.
4. **Call MPI – 0800 80 99 66.**



Pictures 2-4 above from B3 presentation by Suzy Perry, Biosecurity Queensland