

# Myrtle Rust & Garden Retail & Landscape Guidance

## Background

Since the announcement of the discovery of Myrtle Rust in a Kerikeri Nursery on 4 May, the situation has evolved at a rapid pace. Further discoveries were made in Taranaki and Te Kuiti. The detection of myrtle rust in Taranaki is not linked to Kerikeri via plant movements. However, there is a connection between Taranaki and the Te Kuiti find.

## Action Guidelines

NZPPI has issued clear guidelines on steps that plant producers and retailers can put in place to protect their business activities and their on-going ability to dispatch, receive and retail plants – the NZPPI **Myrtle Rust Risk Management Protocols**. These protocols provide a basis for an ongoing management strategy.

1. **Staff awareness** – Share this document, the [Myrtle Rust Identification Guide](#) and [photos on the NZPPI website](#) with all staff to raise awareness of the disease. Talk about what to look for and to do if they find anything suspicious. Inspect existing stock of Myrtaceae plant family held in store.
2. **Nursery hygiene assurance** – Seek assurances from all nursery suppliers that they have adopted the following NZPPI protocols and can provide a [Nursery Management Declaration](#):
  - a) [Nursery Management Protocol](#), including preventative fungicide treatments
  - b) [Myrtaceae Plant Inspection Protocol](#)
  - c) [Plant Transport Protocol](#) and [Plant Transport Declaration](#) (is used by their own drivers or their third-party carrier)
  - d) And that they sterilize their pallets, trolleys, frames and other shipping containers. New plant cartons do not have to be treated.
3. **Quarantine incoming plant stock** - Maintain a quarantine area for imported plant stock with a suitable buffer zone. Inspect plant stock upon arrival.
  - a) **If you find anything suspicious, call MPI - 0800 80 99 66.**  
If possible, isolate the plants with an igloo-hoop-like plastic cover.
  - b) If you did not find anything suspicious, spray with one of the recommended fungicides.
4. **Crop aggregation** - Consolidate all myrtaceous plant species within a defined area on-site and away from native or landscape planted myrtaceous plant species. Avoid direct exposure (buffer) to the prevailing winds of the season.

**Protocols and guidance** for the procedures referred to in this document can be found on the NZPPI Myrtle Rust webpage: [www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust](http://www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust) unless otherwise specified.

- Myrtaceae Species List
- Nursery Management Protocol
- Nursery Management Declaration
- Plant Inspection Protocol
- Fungicide Treatments List
- Plant Transport Protocol
- Plant Transport Declaration
- Myrtle Rust Identification Guide



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5. **Plant Inspection schedule** - Periodically (weekly) survey myrtaceous species on-site, or along property boundaries, roads etc.  
If you find nothing suspicious, begin or continue treatment with one of the recommended fungicides (see #6 below).
6. **Preventative fungicide programme** - Implement a fortnightly fungicide treatment programme across all myrtaceous plants you hold in stock. (see “Myrtle Rust Fungicide Treatments” at [www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust](http://www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust)). If using fungicides on a regular basis, ensure a suitable fungicide rotation system is in place to prevent resistance development to a particular group of fungicides. Copper based sprays are recommended in a retail situation where health and safety issues about required withholding periods that conflict with customer access.
7. **Treat display beds** - Treat display and holding beds when tidying between crops with a disinfectant (eg copper) before placing a new crop down on the display, holding or bench area.
8. **Remove waste material** - Dispose of all waste plant material from garden centre via bulk waste, composting or deep burial.
9. **Personal hygiene** – Have staff wash hands before commencing work at the start of the day, and after breaks using a hand sanitation product
10. **Disinfest all tools and equipment** - All items including surfaces using a recognised industry disinfectant such as Virkon S, or a combination of 70% Methylated Spirits and 30% water.
11. **Dealing with the public** – Prepare staff for questions from the public – see NZPPI Key Messages at [www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust](http://www.nzppi.co.nz/myrtlerust), the articles at [www.gogardening.co.nz](http://www.gogardening.co.nz) and the MPI and DOC websites - [www.mpi.govt.nz](http://www.mpi.govt.nz) and [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz).
12. **Garden Chemicals** – Few home garden chemicals are registered for rust diseases. Those that are include:
  - a) Myclobutanil – available as Yates Fungus Fighter; Yates Super Shield; Kiwicare Spectrum; Combat.
  - b) Azoxystrobin – available as Kiwicare Rose Force.
  - c) Copper based formulations – available as Yates Liquid Copper & Copper Oxychloride; Kiwicare Organic Copper Oxy.



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### Should the worst-case scenario occur and Myrtle Rust is detected in store:

1. Do not attempt to touch or collect samples as this may increase the spread of this disease.
2. Take photos of the suspected myrtle rust and the whole plant.
3. Do not move the plants from the site or your truck.
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.**

If the Garden Centre is attached to a large format hardware store, then it is likely that the garden retail component of the store will be isolated from the main store. This will apply in situations where there is a demonstrable physical barrier in place, eg doors. Where this separation is possible it is unlikely that MPI will close any other aspect of the store.

Any business that is declared an RP (Restricted Place) is eligible for compensation for any loss of earnings that occur.

