

# Myrtle Rust Nursery Management Protocol

The following simple strategies should be applied (where possible) across all businesses growing and/or selling myrtle rust host material (Myrtaceae species). All other species should be grown in accordance with sound nursery hygiene and crop protection best practices.

1. **Staff awareness** – Share this document, and the Myrtle Rust Identification Guide, and 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
2. **Nursery hygiene assurance** – If you grow Myrtaceae species, adopt the NZPPI protocols and guidance as described below:
3. **Crop aggregation** – Consolidate all myrtaceous plant species within a defined area onsite and away from native or landscape planted myrtaceous plant species. Avoid direct exposure (buffer) to the prevailing winds of the season.
4. **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.
5. **Crop inspection schedule** – Periodically (weekly) survey myrtaceous species on-site, or along property boundaries, roads etc. Pay attention to plants located upwind based on the most common prevailing wind direction of the season.
6. **Preventative fungicide programme** – Implement a regular fungicide treatment programme across all myrtaceous plants.
  - a. Fortnightly from spring to late autumn (October to May)
  - b. Monthly in winter (June to September)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.
7. **Treat growing areas between crops** – Treat the growing area with a disinfectant (e.g. copper) upon the completion of the crop growing cycle before placing a new crop down on the production bed or bench.
8. **Nursery dispatch inspections** – Inspect and treat (with fungicide) all myrtaceous species prior to dispatch.

**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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9. **Sterilize shipping containers** – sterilize pallets, trolleys, frames and other shipping containers with Virkon S or equivalent. New cardboard cartons do not need to be treated.
10. **Care in transporting plants** – adopt NZPPI’s Plant Transport Protocol to manage the risk of your truck or that of a third-party carrier you use spreading myrtle rust.
11. **Restrict access** – Allow access to your production areas only to vehicles and people essential for nursery operations.
12. **Remove waste material** – Dispose of all extraneous vegetative plant material from nursery via bulk waste, composting or deep burial.
13. **Personal hygiene** – Have staff wash hands before commencing work at the start of the day, and after breaks using a recognized hand sanitation product.
14. **Disinfect nursery propagation area** – Regularly disinfect propagation surfaces throughout the day at various points such as upon returning from a break, a change of species or batch.
15. **Disinfect all tools and equipment** – Regularly disinfect all items that can be surface wiped or dipped in disinfectant solutions using a recognised industry disinfectant such as Virkon S (or equivalent), or a combination of 70% Methylated Spirits and 30% water or a quaternary ammonium compound.

## If you find anything suspicious

1. Do not move the plants from the site or your truck.
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.**



Pictures 2-3 above from B3 presentation by Suzy Perry, Biosecurity Queensland