Washington County Master Gardeners
Growing Healthy Plants
Basics in Plant Disease Management

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Plant Disease Management
Definition

- Anything that you can do to reduce the impact of disease
- Integrated with other types of management

Plant Disease Management
Diagnosis

- First step in successful management
- Recognition that something is wrong
- Detective work to figure out what happened and why something happened

Plant Disease Management
The Disease Triangle

- Susceptible Host
- Pathogen
- Favorable Environment

Plant Disease Management
Resistance

- Using a plant's natural ability to fend off disease

Plant Disease Management
R-E-P-E-A-T

- Resistance
- Exclusion
- Protection
- Eradication
- Avoidance
- Therapy
• Resistance is NOT universal!

• Resistance is NOT immunity!

• Resistance can depend on plant “age” and plant part!

• Resistance effectiveness can depend on the weather!

• Resistance may not be equally effective in all locations!

• Resistance is sometimes NOT forever!
• Resistance is not everything you may need in a plant!

• Resistance is not always good!

• Preventing introduction of pathogens into your garden

• Buy healthy plants!

• Buy healthy seeds!

• Limit soil movement!
Plant Disease Management
Exclusion

• Limit other pathogen introductions!

Plant Disease Management
Exclusion

• Decontaminate, decontaminate, decontaminate!

Plant Disease Management
Protection

• Applying materials to prevent infections by pathogens from occurring

Plant Disease Management
Protection

• Use as a last resort!
• Read pesticide labels!
• Use proper rates!
• Apply at the right times!
• Wear appropriate clothing!
• Alternate active ingredients!
• Get training!

Plant Disease Management
Eradication

• Getting rid of pathogens once they have arrived in your garden

Plant Disease Management
Eradication

• Do good fall clean-up!
• Prune diseased branches!

• Remove entire plants!

• Control alternate hosts!

• Control weeds!

• Rotate, rotate, rotate!

• Decontaminate, decontaminate, decontaminate!
Manipulating how you grow your plants to prevent conditions favorable for disease

DO NOT plant susceptible plants where a known disease exists!

DO NOT plant too early or too deeply!

DO NOT plant too densely!

DO NOT water too much!

DO NOT use sprinklers to water!
Plant Disease Management

Avoidance

• DO NOT water, heat or nutrient stress plants!

Plant Disease Management

Therapy

• Eliminating pathogens from infected plants

Plant Disease Management

Putting It All Together

• Figure out what diseases you have
• Figure out what management techniques work
• Integrate your disease management with other management needs
• DO NOT expect perfection
• Enjoy your garden (including the diseases)

Plant Disease Management

Where to Go for Help

Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic
Department of Plant Pathology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1630 Linden Drive
Madison, WI 53706-1598
(608) 262-2863
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