



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Banana bunchy top (121)



Photo 1. Banana plants of different ages showing symptoms of *Banana bunchy top virus* disease. Notice the stunted plants and the colour of the leaves, which are pale yellow at the margins.



Photo 2. Symptoms of *Banana bunchy top virus*. Notice the leaves are upright, stunted and tend to cluster in the throat of the plant; leaves like this are said to be "choked", and give the bunchy top symptom.



Photo 3. Underside of a banana leaf showing veins that have dark and light areas (dots and dashes) along them. The veins near the midrib bend down, "hooking" into it.



Photo 4. Colony of the banana aphid, *Pentalonia nigronervosa*. Note the dark colour of the adults and the nymphs. The dark veins of the winged adults can just be seen on the insect at the top left corner.

Summary

- Widespread distribution. Asia, Africa, Oceania. On bananas and other *Musa* species. BBT is caused by a virus. It is spread by aphids, and in suckers for planting. Major losses occur in 2-3 years.
- Dark-green dots and dashes along leaf veins (insert).
- Cultural control: regular monitoring and removal of plants as soon as BBT seen: (i) kill aphids: spray with kerosene or insecticide; (ii) dig out the matt or kill the plant with herbicide (e.g., glyphosate).
- Chemical control: to kill aphids on diseased plants only, (i) bananas for home – use soap, white or horticultural oils (or kerosene); (ii) commercial plantations – use synthetic pyrethroids. Note, chemicals will not prevent spread of BBT.

Common Name

Banana bunchy top

Scientific Name

Banana bunchy top nanavirus. The abbreviation is BBTV.

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Information from CABI (2015) *Banana bunchy top virus* (bunchy top of banana) Crop Protection Compendium. (www.cabi.org/cpc). Photo 1 Richard Markham. ACIAR, Canberra.

Produced with support from the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research under project PC/2010/090: *Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production*, implemented by the University of Queensland and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

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