



Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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Banana freckle (124)



Photo 1. Small, raised spots with the flask-shaped fruiting bodies containing spores. The spots are at first reddish-brown later turning black and joining together to form patches or streaks.



Photo 2. Dark brown to black spots, 0.5-1 mm diameter, on the upper leaf surface.



Photo 3. Large numbers of spots on the leaves causing them to turn yellow and die early.



Photo 4. Early death of the leaf due to freckle infection beginning at the leaf margin.



Photo 5. Spots caused by the banana freckle fungus on the fruit.

Summary

- Narrow distribution. Asia, US (Hawaii), Oceania. Four species. On banana. Note, one species infects Cavendish (and AAB and ABB), and is widely distributed. An important disease.
- Reddish-brown spots (0.5-1 mm), turning dark, on the top of leaf, sometimes in groups. Feels rough, as sacs with spores protrude above leaf and fruit surfaces. Leaves turn yellow and die early. Spots on fruits affect sales.
- Spread in wind and rain, in leaves, suckers and fruit.
- Biosecurity: under eradication in Australia (Northern Territory).

- Cultural control: bag bunches; cut out leaf infections.
- Chemical control: if needed, use mancozeb, triazoles or strobilurins (see notes Fact Sheet no. 2).

Common Name

Banana freckle

Scientific Name

Previously, freckle was *Phyllosticta musarum* and its sexual form, *Guignardia musae*; now four species are recognised: *Phyllosticta cavendishii*, *Phyllosticta musarum*, *Phyllosticta maculata*, and *Guignardia stevensii*.

AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

¹A way of classifying banana depending on the number of chromosomes and the ratio of the parents *Musa accuminata* and *Musa balbisiana*. Photo 1 Gerlach WWP (1988) *Plant diseases of Western Samoa*. Samoan German Crop Protection Project, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Germany). Photos 2,3&5 *Diseases of fruit crops in Australia* (2009). Editors, Tony Cooke, Denis Persley, Susan House. CSIRO Publishing. Photo 4 Jacque (Wright) Kami, formerly Plant Pathologist, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Suva, Fiji.

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