

Kava dieback (160)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. A virus with a large host range. It is especially common in the cucumber, legume and potato families. Common on kava, banana, cantaloupe melon, capsicum, chilli, pumpkin, snake gourd, tomato and watermelon, and in weeds.
- Spread is by aphids.
- On kava, look for crinkled leaves, with patches of yellow or white along the veins; cut stems to find brown lines inside, and black rotten stems that break.
- Cultural control: plant away from other kava in well-drained fertile soil under shade; surround plots with e.g., bananas, *bele*, cassava, citrus, papaya, sugarcane; plant cuttings in nursery to check if free from disease; weed; if disease occurs break off diseased stem just above ground level. If the plant is less than 1-year-old, replace the plant.
- Chemical control: none recommended.

Common Name

Kava dieback

Scientific Name

Cucumber mosaic virus causes kava dieback; the abbreviation is CMV.

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Information from (including Photos 1-3) Davis RJ (2005) Kava dieback. Plant Advisory Leaflet No. 47. Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Quality Print, Suva, Fiji Islands; and Davis RJ et al. (2005) Cucumber mosaic virus infection of kava (*Piper methysticum*) and implications for cultural control of kava dieback disease. Australasian Plant Pathology 34: 377-384. (<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1071/AP05050>); and from Mereia Fong-Lomavatu et al. (2006) Yaqona dieback disease management: A package of practice. Koronivia Research Station, Ministry of Primary Industries, Fiji Islands.

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Photo 1. Kava leaf showing yellow-green mosaic patterns and distortions typical of infection from *Cucumber mosaic virus*.



Photo 2. Kava leaf showing vein-banding symptom of *Cucumber mosaic virus* infection.



Photo 3. Kava plant with blackened stem that has collapsed at the node, typical of kava dieback caused by *Cucumber mosaic virus*.

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