

Banana leaf speckle (308)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Several fungi involved. Minor diseases.
- Small spots or streaks at first, later joining together forming light brown, diffuse, irregular patches up to 5 cm diameter on the leaves, and fruit and fruit stalks; usually more obvious on undersurfaces. Reddish-brown to black spots on fruits, with more at the flower end.
- Spores formed on underside of leaves and spread by wind and rain.
- Cultural control: remove dead leaves from plantation; remove shade and weeds; desucker plants to aid air movement and drying of leaves; promote healthy growth with fertilizer and/or manures; mulch, but not with old banana leaves.
- Chemical control: unlikely to be needed. Fungicides for banana black Sigatoka likely to control this disease (see **Fact Sheet no. 02**).

Common Name

Banana speckle, banana leaf speckle, tropical speckle, common speckle. Note, a disease known as 'fruit speckle' also exists.

Scientific Name

Metulocladosporiella musae (previous names are *Cladosporium musae*, and *Periconiella sapientumicola*), *Ramichloridium biverticillatum* (*Periconiella musae*), *Ramichloridium musae* (*Periconiella musae*, *Veronaea musae*), and *Mycosphaerella musae* are all referred to a 'leaf speckle'. *Ramichloridium* species are also said to cause 'tropical speckle'. *Mycosphaerella musae* is called 'common speckle'. *Colletotrichum musae* and *Fusarium* species cause 'fruit speckle' in Australia.



Photo 1. *Ramichloridium biverticillatum* symptoms on leaves of banana.



Photo 2. Tropical speckle, *Ramichloridium* species. The symptoms are best seen on the underside of the leaf as tan, circular blotches.



Photo 3. Leaf speckle, *Mycosphaerella musae*.



Photo 4. Leaf speckle, *Mycosphaerella musae*, on an older leaf.



Photo 5. Fruit speckle on Cavendish fruit, *Colletotrichum musae* and *Fusarium* species.

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¹Information from Graham KM (1971) *Plant diseases of Fiji*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London; and (including Photos 2-5) ²*Diseases of fruit crops in Australia* (2009). Editors, Tony Cooke, et al. CSIRO Publishing; and from (including Photo 1) McKenzie E (2013) *Ramichloridium biverticillatum*: PaDIL - (<http://www.padil.gov.au>).

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