

Raspberry Spur Blight



Spur Blight (*Didymella applanata*) is a fungal disease that affects raspberries and occasionally loganberries. It is usually most troublesome in wet weather, but occurs in most seasons regardless of the weather. Plants that have been fed excessive quantities of nitrogen or which are overcrowded are more prone to infection and encourage the disease to spread rapidly.

DAMAGE

Small dark purple blotches develop around the buds of new canes in the early autumn. These increase in size and spread up and down the canes causing extensive discolouration. In August, when

they become very conspicuous, they are 5-8cm long and sometimes join together to form a discoloured length of cane measuring approximately 15cm in length, which may eventually girdle the cane.

During the autumn and winter the blotches turn silver and become covered in numerous, minute, raised black spots, which are the fruit bodies of the Spur Blight fungus. Buds wither and die or produce shoots which die back during the spring. Infected shoots that persist crop very poorly.

CONTROL

Non Chemical Control

Spur Blight tends to be most serious on plants which have been given too much nitrogen, care should be taken to feed in the correct manner. As a precautionary measure, young canes superfluous to requirements should be removed early in the season so as to avoid overcrowding. Diseased canes should be cut out and burned as soon as the patches start to appear. The varieties Glen Moy and Malling Admiral show some resistance to Spur Blight.

Chemical Control

There are no label approved fungicides available to the home gardener for use against this condition.