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Pansy: End of Season Wrap-up

The fall pansy season is nearing the end of its production time. This Alert contains a 2-page handout (pages 3 and 4) of problems encountered this season. Those 2 pages can be printed and posted in the greenhouse.



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Metro Detroit Flower Growers Association



Top Tips for Diagnosing and Managing Pansy Disorders

Patrick Veazie¹ and Brian Whipker¹

NC State University Horticulture Department

Successfully growing healthy pansies requires attention to nutrition, environmental conditions, pests, and diseases. Identifying issues early can prevent larger problems later in production. These top tips aid in diagnosing common problems.



Nutritional

- A. Iron Deficiency:** interveinal chlorosis of new growth. In severe cases, entire leaf chlorosis/bleaching may occur.
- B. New Growth Distortion:** can result from a boron deficiency. Boron deficiency will often result in impacted foliage feeling “thicker” than normal growth.
- C. Low EC (Production):** low fertility results in chlorosis of the lower foliage that can move upward to the middle foliage. Plants are stunted. Low EC problems are common in outdoor production after heavy rain events.
- D. Phosphorus Deficiency** can be observed in cool climates as lower leaf purpling or olive-green spotting on lower foliage under warmer growing conditions.

Physiological

- A. Plant Stretch** due to limited spacing or lack of PGR application.
- B. Heat stress** can result in increased plant stress, flowering delay, and wilting. Providing shading and air movement can help reduce heat stress.
- C. PGR Overdose:** stunted growth, leaf distortion, and delayed flowering. Phytotoxicity can occur if the PGR application rate is excessive, during excessively hot conditions, or if the product is not suitable for pansies.
- D. Drought Stress:** Wilting and leaf necrosis when water stressed. Damaged leaves typically occur on the upper foliage and marginal necrosis and interior leaf spotting symptoms are possible.



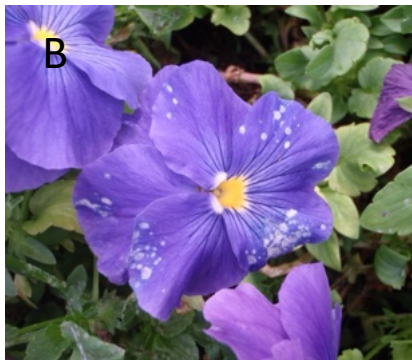
Top Tips for Diagnosing and Managing Pansy Disorders

Disease

A



B



- A. **Cercospora Leaf Spot:** Small, dark purple to brown leaf spots with a yellow halo. Severe cases lead to defoliation and reduced plant vigor.
- B. **Botrytis** is a fungal pathogen that typically appears as brown, water-soaked lesions on stems, foliage, of flowers, often accompanied by a gray, fuzzy mold. Stem collapse may be observed.
- C. **Thielaviopsis** (Black Root Rot): Blackened, rotting roots, stunted growth, yellowing leaves, and eventual plant decline. Avoid overwatering, ensure proper drainage, and apply fungicides when necessary.
- D. **Crown Rot:** Fungal pathogens like *Phytophthora* and *Rhizoctonia*, resulting in soft, dark brown rot at the base of the plant, wilting, and plant collapse.

C



D



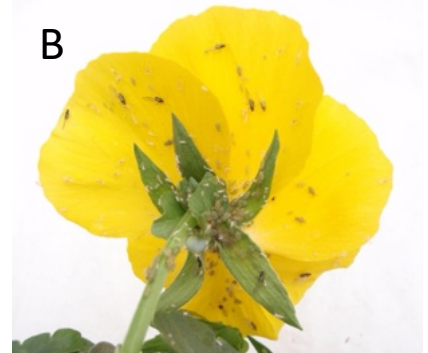
Pest

- A. **Pansyworm:** Irregular holes in leaves and flowers, chewed petals, and frass (insect droppings) near feeding sites.
- B. **Aphids:** Curling or yellowing leaves, distorted growth, sticky honeydew residue, and sooty mold development.
- C. **Western Flower Thrips:** Silvery or stippled leaves, deformed flowers, and black fecal spots. Heavy infestations reduce plant vigor. Populations should be monitored as thrips are a virus for viruses.
- D. **Spider Mites:** stippling, yellowing, bronzing, and webbing on the plant. Spider mites are visible to the naked eye and under severe infestations webbing and large colonies can be observed on the growing tips.

A



B



C



D

