

Bunchy Top Disease of Banana

Recognize the problem

The first symptoms are dark green dots and streaks on the lower portion of the main vein and leaf petiole. Later, these streaks become more evident on the leaf blade and develop 'hooks' as they enter the main vein. These streaks can be seen better when the wax surface of the leaf has been removed and the leaf is held towards sunlight. In the later stages of infection, the leaves become narrower and shorter and the margins of the leaves roll upwards. Severely infected plants become stunted as a result of the reduced leaf size and the leaves become bunched together at the apex of the plant.

Background

This is an important disease of banana. It is caused by virus. Once the virus enters the plant, it remains there forever, so the disease cannot be cured. The virus that causes the disease is transmitted by aphids from one plant to another in the orchard, and from infected seedlings or suckers from one place to another.

Management

- Infected plants should be removed and buried in the soil as soon as the symptoms have been observed
- Entrance of infected suckers into the community must be avoided by all community members
- Aphids should be controlled using a botanical pesticide. Neem-based botanical pesticides like Margosom or Nimbicide can be used.
- Dimethoate @ 2 ml/lit water can be used for a large scale farms

Young plants showing the signs of Banana bunchy top virus. (Photo by Shalik Ram)



'Rosette' or 'bunchytop' appearance of BBTV-infected banana (Photo by David Jones)



When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Banana bunchy top virus*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Nepal



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