

Hygiene measures to reduce spread of Fusarium Wilt

The disease is primarily spread via infected soil/crop debris so consider the following measures to keep the disease out of your nursery:

- Do not visit other lettuce nurseries for any reason.
- Limit visitors onto your holding.
- Erect signage to direct visitors straight to the office and away from entering other buildings or growing areas.
- Install foot baths/sanitation mats in the car park and direct workers and visitors to dip their footwear both on arrival and prior to departing.
- Be cognisant of the potential of trade delivery vehicles (packaging, product, fertiliser, pesticides etc.) to spread disease – ensure that other lettuce nurseries are not on their route.
- To reduce spread of the disease by vehicles install tyre disinfection mats at the entrance to the premises.
- To reduce internal spread within the nursery power hose machinery and use a disinfectant regularly and especially when moving from one house to another.
- Install foot baths/sanitation mats at every glasshouse entrance to be used by staff.
- Encourage staff to wash hands, clean boots and clothing and utilise disinfection procedures, when leaving one glasshouse and to follow the same disinfection procedures when entering another house
- If there are multiple cultivation/planting machines restrict each set to certain set areas of the nursery.
- If an initial outbreak is noticed bag the infected plants and remove them. If the outbreak is widespread do not rotavate the crop down – collect up the plants and dispose of off-site. This will reduce inoculum build-up. Stop growing in that particular house or block.
- If you have a burner use it between crops to destroy debris and surface sterilise the soil. It will not be effective on spores deeper down in the soil.
- If importing plants ensure that the plant containers are sterilised.
- If propagating your own plants sterilise both equipment and structures. Trays need to be washed to remove all traces of soil/compost and sterilised prior to being reused.
- Plastic product crates normally go through an effective washing regime between cycles, but check that they are clean, and stack them off the ground on clean pallets.
- Any pallets with a connection to a lettuce producer/propagator however indirect, will need to be sterilised as potentially they could be a source of contamination.

As this is an evolving situation, all information is provided in good faith and every effort has been made to ensure it is as accurate as possible at the date of publication.