Botrytis grey mould in potatoes

Botrytis grey mould (Botrytis vine rot) is caused by the fungus *Botrytis cinerea*. This disease can be yield-limiting and cause production and storage problems.

Botrytis cinerea is an opportunistic fungus that infects damaged, stressed, or dying plant tissues. It has a very wide range of host plants and can survive on dead plant material, making the pathogen common across Canadian potato fields.

The disease thrives in warm, humid and moist conditions and penetrates leaves through wounds or dead and dying tissue like spent blossoms. In ideal conditions (18-24˚C with wet foliage), spores can germinate and infect plants in only five hours. Although less common, infection can also occur on damaged tubers at harvest, in transit or at grading.

Symptoms of Botrytis grey mould in potatoes:

On leaves Angular lesions beginning at the leaf tips or leaf margins; wider zones of pale grey are separated by darker, narrow zones. As leaves shrink and curl, fuzzy grey mycelium and sporulation may be visible on both sides of the leaf when conditions are moist or humid.

On stems Light-coloured lesions develop and then become hollow and bleached. Mycelium and spores can develop on stems, and long (one to several centimeters), narrow (a few millimeters), and tiny (a few millimeters) black overwintering structures called sclerotia will also develop.

On tubers The skin wrinkles, and underlying tissues become soft and wet, eventually darkening and turning into dry rot.

Source: Crop IPM, OMAFRA, Botrytis grey mould infection on tubers , https://cropipm.omafra.gov.on.ca/en-ca/crops/potatoes/diseases/43b21074-8824-47df-b6e6-777030208026#identification

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Stop Botrytis before it spreads

An integrated disease management strategy is the most effective approach to managing Botrytis grey mould in potatoes and should incorporate a mix of cultural and chemical control practices.

How to manage Botrytis grey mould

Scout early:
Inspect injured plants closely and check the inner canopy where initial infection starts.

Air flow:
Improve air flow in field and avoid excessive vine growth.

Apply preventively:
Use Syngenta fungicides before symptoms appear.

Optimize fungicide coverage:
Ensure spray penetrates the canopy where protection is needed most.

Irrigation:
Consider irrigating when leaves are already wet (i.e., when dew is present) to avoid extended leaf wetness periods.

Syngenta solutions:

Product	FRAC Group	Rate**	Application Notes
Bravo ZN *	M	0.65-0.97 L/acre	Use preventively. Consider one application during or after bloom, when Botrytis risk increases.
Miravis Duo	3 + 7	0.4 L/ac	Apply prior to disease establishment; use a shorter interval when disease pressure is high.

*Product rate for Botrytis vine rot and early blight – product rate for late blight is 0.49-0.97 L/ac.

**Suppression

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