

Banana Freckle

THE
TERRITORY



Banana freckle on a leaf



What is it?

Banana freckle is a plant disease caused by the fungus *Phyllosticta cavendishii*. This species is exotic to Australia, and affects Cavendish and non-Cavendish banana cultivars. It is a declared and notifiable pest under the Northern Territory (NT) *Plant Health Act 2008*.

If you notice suspect symptoms, you must report it to NT Plant Biosecurity on 08 8999 2136 or email BananaFreckle.NT@nt.gov.au.

Banana freckle is a serious threat to the banana industry as well as backyard growers. The disease decreases plant health and productivity, and affects fruit quality and appearance.

Blemished fruit may not be marketable and production costs may increase with some of these increased costs passed onto consumers. Banana freckle is a fungal disease of banana leaves and fruit. There is no risk to human health from eating banana freckle infected bananas.

It is important government, industry, growers and the public all work together to limit the impacts of this pest so we can all enjoy healthy NT grown bananas.

 Join the Biosecurity Facebook Group [@biosecNT](https://www.facebook.com/biosecNT)

Visit nt.gov.au/banana-freckle



Symptoms

- 'Sandpapery feeling' spots, predominantly on leaves and fruit.
- Spots can be very small to large (1–4 mm) and dark brown to black in colour.
- The spots can run together to form streaks.
- The spots have a sandpaper feel when touched because the fungal structures protrude through the plant surface.
- Severe infection results in yellowing of the leaf, which can wither and die.

Action

A response plan to eradicate banana freckle from the Northern Territory is underway.

Surveillance is continuing to determine how far the disease has spread. If we have attended your property and you are not home, we will leave information for you to call us. All properties in areas where the disease has been found are being visited to check for banana plants. If no evidence of the disease is found on your property then plants will not be destroyed.

We appreciate all help from the public and thank those people who have already let us inspect their banana plants.

The removal of infected plants has also begun in accordance with the approved National Response Plan. It is important we remove all plants from infected properties as the disease can be spread by wind and rain.

Healthier plants mean more fruit for you and a stronger more productive NT Banana industry. Biosecurity is everyone's responsibility and together we can ensure our industries are protected.

Get a plant health check

If you are in the Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas, call the banana freckle team for a banana health check on 08 8999 2136 or email BananaFreckle.NT@nt.gov.au.

The nature of a biosecurity outbreak means actions can rapidly change. To stay up to date on information, check our webpage nt.gov.au/banana-freckle or the Biosecurity Facebook Group [@biosecNT](https://www.facebook.com/biosecNT).

For more information, go to industry.nt.gov.au

Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade



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