

Prevent Disease on Bareroot in Storage

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Management of bareroot nursery stock in storage is difficult. All fungi growth is not harmful and impossible to prevent in such an environment. A dirt floor is preferred. Concrete will pull moisture away from the plants and is not recommended.

Rake and remove the debris from the dirt floor daily. Use a solution of household bleach to disinfect the dirt floor, masonry walls, tables, benches, partitions, etc., occasionally.

Mix 1 part of bleach to 9 parts of water to achieve a 10% solution. This might be 1 gal of bleach and 9 gal. of water. Use it freely as a very coarse spray or even heavier, as if swabbing the deck on the tables.

Household bleach is a good disinfectant; economical, readily available, easy and safe to use. Colored clothing can be bleached by it, however, especially while pouring and mixing. Avoid contact with the eyes.

Household bleach will kill bacteria and fungi; but is volatile and will dissipate rather quickly. It will only kill the disease organisms that are present when it is applied. There is no residual control provided by household bleach after drying occurs.

The process can be repeated safely as often as management and prior problems dictate. Grading tables should be swabbed down at the end of each day. Bins can be sprayed down each time they are emptied. High traffic areas perhaps need to be treated more often.

Some air movement, created by a fan(s), is good to distribute the moisture, to reduce wet and dry areas. Try to keep the moisture high enough to begin to form moisture on the ceiling, but not excessively. When the dripping becomes excessive, open the door until it slows down.

Try to spray water on the dirt floor more often than you spray the roots. But spray the roots often enough to prevent them from drying. The moisture will rise from the floor.

Once the bareroot plants are brought into the shed, they may be sprayed with a **coarse spray of 20 fluid ounces of Cleary's 3336F per 100 gallons of water or 1 1/4 teaspoons per gallon of water, or 3.75 teaspoons per 3 gallons.**

Cleary's 3336 WP is now available; and can be used at 12 ounces by weight per 100 gallons or 1 teaspoon per gallon or 1 Tablespoon per 3 gallons.

Do a good job of spraying the roots, but it's safe for the tops as well. Fungicides sprayed on the dirt floor, masonry, or wood are likely wasted.

Observe the roots daily for any sign of fungal growth. Re-spray as often as necessary. But remember, all fungi are not harmful. A packing shed offers the perfect environment for fungi -- high moisture, warm air and little air movement.

Factors such as temperature, humidity, moisture, and air circulation dictate if or when fungal growth might occur and spray frequency.

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