

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 connected to a lettuce producer/propagator/wholesaler however indirect, will need to be sterilised as potentially they could be a source of contamination.