



## 2006 Florida Plant Disease Management Guide: Sweet Basil<sup>1</sup>

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### Leaf Spot (*Colletotrichum* sp.)

**Symptoms:** Dark spots form on leaves and the dead tissue within leaf spots may drop out, causing a shot-hole symptom. The disease can cause defoliation, tip dieback, stem lesions, and sometimes loss of entire plants. Spores are water-splashed from diseased tissue.

**Cultural Controls:** Sow seeds in sterile containers in sterile soil. Since wet conditions favor disease development, reduce leaf wetness periods by reducing humidity and increase plant spacing to increase air movement. Avoid overhead irrigation. Remove disease plants to reduce inoculum levels.

### Bacterial Leaf Spot (*Pseudomonas cichorii*)

**Symptoms:** Spots on leaves are water-soaked, dark, and may be both angular and delineated by small veins in the leaves or show as irregular leaf spots. A wet stem rot may occur. Bacterium is reported to be seed-borne. The disease is favored by wet, humid conditions and is disseminated by

splashing water or by handling and spreading infected tissue.

**Cultural Controls:** Decrease moisture on plants with low humidity and sufficient plant spacing for adequate movement to reduce leaf wetness periods. Use disease-free seed and transplants. Remove diseased leaves and plants to reduce inoculum levels. Avoid overhead irrigation. Use clean, sterile equipment and do not move between infected and healthy plants.

### Fusarium Wilt (*Fusarium oxysporum*)

**Symptoms:** Initial disease symptoms are yellowing of the shoots, distorted young leaves, and internal vascular discoloration of stems. As the disease advances, plants wilt and die. The pathogen is seed-borne and survives in the soil for many years.

**Cultural Controls:** Use disease-free seed in sterilized soil. Seed may be disinfested. Rotate fields away from basil. Some resistant cultivars are reported.

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1. This document is PP-113, one of a series of the Department of Plant Pathology, 2006 Florida Plant Disease Management Guide, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Date revised December 2005. Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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