

2007 Florida Plant Disease Management Guide: Watercress¹

Pam Roberts²

Specific Common Diseases

Cercospora Leaf Spot (*Cercospora nasturtii*)

Symptoms: Round to oval lesions develop on leaves. Leaf spots are light-colored and may coalesce to cover large areas of tissue. The pathogen produces abundant spores that are easily water-splashed or airborne.

Cultural Control: Insure that previous watercress debris is well decomposed before replanting of land. Eradicate volunteer plants and weed relatives in the *Nasturtium* genus to prevent carry over of this fungus from the field perimeter.

Chemical Control: See PPP-6.

Damping-Off (*Rhizoctonia*, *Pythium*, *Fusarium*, and *Sclerotinia* spp.)

Symptoms: The distribution of seedlings that damp-off may be at random or in rapidly enlarging circular areas in the seedbeds. In the latter case, lesions may be observed well up on the petioles as well as the soil line. Entire plantings may be lost

unless adequate control measures are practiced. Do not transplant disease plants.

Chemical Control: See PPP-6.

Rhizoctonia Rot (*Rhizoctonia solani*)

Symptoms: *Rhizoctonia* is a soilborne fungus that can cause a damping-off of seedlings or seeds, as well as a mature plant decline from rot and stem decay. The fungus often invades at soil line producing a light-to-reddish-brown canker on the lower stem. Lower leaves exhibit yellowing, followed by necrosis and progressive plant wilt to death.

Cultural Control: Insure summer vegetation or previous crop debris is well decomposed prior to planting.

Chemical Control: See PPP-6.

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Viral Diseases (*Cucumber mosaic*, *Cabbage Leaf Curl*)

Symptoms: A single virus or multiple infection of several viruses can produce a variety of plant symptoms that include mosaic leaf distortion, ring spotting and stunting. *Cucumber mosaic virus* is vectored by aphids in a semi-persistent manner. *Cabbage leaf curl virus* is vectored by white flies.

Cultural Control: Clean field and field borders of volunteer crops and weeds to minimize reservoirs for both vector insects and viruses.