



What is a Disease?

Diseases affect Plants too!

What is a Disease?

A disease is a condition caused by tiny organisms which hampers the growth and development of a plant. A diseased plant does not produce in the way it should (both in term of quantity and quality) and can die prematurely.

Plant Diseases

Most plant diseases are caused by:

- Bacteria
- Fungi
- Nematodes
- Viruses

Disease Organisms Affect Plants:

- By producing toxins
- By depriving plant of food
- By occupying space (nematodes)
- By blocking water

Diseases are Transmitted

Pathogens that cause diseases are spread by:

- Wind
- Pests
- Water

- Humans
- Animals and Birds
- Contaminated equipment
- Infected planting materials
- Soil splash
- Plant to plant by physical contact

Symptoms of Diseases

• Wilting (Partial or the entire plant- bacterial wilting). This can be confused with inadequate watering. A plant that wilts due to lack of water will recover when watered (temporary wilting). Plants infected with bacterial wilt will not permanently recover.

• Discoloration (yellowing; mottling- colored spots, chlorosis) may be caused by viruses.

• Water soaked areas may be caused by fungi.

• Abscesses (anthracnose- sinking of fruit; rotting of fruit) may be caused by bacteria or fungi.

• Unnatural Growth- narrowing of leaf blades; curling and crinkling of leaves and shoots, root galls.

• Fuzzy growth, caused by bacteria.

• Leaf spots caused by bacteria or fungi

Other things that may mimic disease symptoms include:

1. Fertilizer burn
2. Pesticide burn
3. Spray drift (herbicide)
4. Nutrient deficiency symptoms can mimic some disease symptoms.

Example; Blossom end rot is a calcium deficiency (large, dry brown or black and often depressed leathery area at the blossom end of the fruit).

Blossom-end rot is a physiological disorder, not disease.

For more information on Pests and Diseases that occur in the Home Garden please visit the Ministry of Agriculture Land and Fisheries Website and download or print our Pest and Disease Manual for Home Gardening. <https://agriculture.gov.tl/.../management-pests-diseases-hom.../>

Video- Disease Management

<https://www.facebook.com/103936031246037/videos/1067657016938106/>

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