

Banana freckle (Cavendish strain)

What is banana freckle?

Banana freckle is a disease of banana leaves and fruit. It is caused by the fungus *Guignardia musae*. A strain of this fungus that infects Lady Finger and Bluggoe bananas occurs in Australia, but the strain that infects Cavendish bananas (Cavendish strain) does not currently occur on mainland Australia.



Sharon Van Brunschot

Typical freckle symptoms on Lady Finger banana leaf



Kathy Girice

Spread of freckle on a leaf, roughly concentrated on leaf veins

What do the symptoms look like?

The most characteristic symptom of freckle is a sandpaper feel to infected (spotted) leaves and fruit. This is caused by the fungal spore structures protruding through the surface of the leaf tissue or fruit peel.



Freckle spots concentrated on leaf veins

Kathy Grice

What can it be confused with?

Banana freckle of Lady Finger and Bluggoe, which already occur in Australia.

How do I distinguish Cavendish strain of banana freckle from the banana freckle already present in Australia?

The strain of banana freckle already present in Australia does not infect Cavendish bananas. If you see any freckle like symptoms on Cavendish bananas report it immediately.

How is it spread?

The pest is spread by the movement of fungal spores on wet leaf surfaces. It can also be spread by contaminated fruit shipments.

Where is it now?

Cavendish strain of banana freckle has been reported from the Philippines and Taiwan. There are unconfirmed reports from India, Borneo and Java.

Freckle disease has been reported on Cavendish bananas in the Ord River production area of Western Australia but it has not been seen there for many years.



Freckle on dwarf Cavendish

Jeff Daniells

How can I protect my farm from banana freckle?

Check your farm frequently for the presence of new pests and unusual symptoms. Make sure you are familiar with common banana pests, so you can tell if you see something different.

If you see anything unusual, call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881.



Freckle on Pisang Abu Nipah bunch in Malaysia

Juliane Henderson

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**

Disclaimer: The material in this publication is for general information only and no person should act, or fail to act on the basis of this material without first obtaining professional advice. Plant Health Australia and all persons acting for Plant Health Australia expressly disclaim liability with respect to anything done in reliance on this publication.