

Eumusae leaf spot

What is Eumusae leaf spot?

Eumusae leaf spot (caused by the fungus *Mycosphaerella eumusae*) is one of three closely related fungi that cause a devastating leaf spot disease on banana. Symptoms are very similar to black Sigatoka (caused by *M. fijiensis*) and yellow Sigatoka (caused by *M. musicola*). All three pests can cause significant reductions in banana production.

Eumusae leaf spot and black Sigatoka are exotic to Australia, while yellow Sigatoka (sometimes referred to as 'leaf spot') is present in all banana growing regions of Australia.

Eumusae leaf spot is the newest member of the *Mycosphaerella* group of fungi to be identified on banana and consequently has not been studied to the same extent as yellow and black Sigatoka. Importantly, Eumusae leaf spot is known to infect cultivars of banana in Sri Lanka and Thailand that have shown high resistance levels to both black and yellow Sigatoka.

What does it look like?

Symptoms of this disease are very similar to black and yellow Sigatoka. The first obvious symptom is a brown streak that expands into a circular spot and eventually darkens. The spot develops a dark brown margin and the centre turns grey. When infection levels are low, individual spots are oval or elliptical when mature. The size and shape of this type of spot distinguishes it from the mature symptoms of black and yellow Sigatoka. When infection density is high the spots join together and cause large areas of leaf tissue to die. The symptoms are still visible in the dead leaf area as grey spots.



Eumusae leaf spots on banana leaf

Juliane Henderson



Advanced Eumusae leaf spot symptoms

Kathy Grice

What can it be confused with?

Symptoms of Eumusae leaf spot can be confused with black Sigatoka or yellow Sigatoka.

What distinguishes Eumusae from other leaf spots?

Reliable diagnosis can only be made using specialist laboratory methods.

How is it spread?

Research into infection and spread of Eumusae leaf spot has not yet been conducted. However, it is assumed that they would be similar to that of black and yellow Sigatoka (i.e. new infections occur when spores are dislodged by wind or water from leaf lesions or trash onto young leaves). Another mode of pest spread is through the movement of infected plant material.

Where is it now?

It has been reported in South and South East Asia, southern India, western Malaysia, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

How can I protect my farm from Eumusae leaf spot?

Only use pest-free planting material.

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.

**EXOTIC PLANT PEST HOTLINE
1800 084 881**

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