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EC59-1821 Plant Diseases : Iris Leaf Spot

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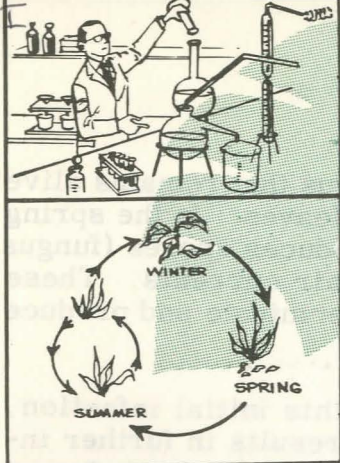
PLANT P-470

DISEASES

JOHN L. WEIHING

Extension Plant Pathologist

Iris Leaf Spot



SYMPTOMS

Leaf spot is the most common disease of Iris in Nebraska. The first evidence of this disease is the appearance on the leaves of small, brown spots surrounded by a water-soaked margin. The spots enlarge and the leaves begin to die back. A heavy infection will cause death of all the leaves. The centers of the older spots take on a grayish color and there appear many small, black dots. These dots are the spore (fungus seed) bearing structures of the disease organism. The premature death of the leaves causes the rhizomes (fleshy roots) to weaken. After a few years of serious attacks, the plants may die.



EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING

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CAUSE

The disease is caused by a fungus that remains alive throughout the winter in the killed leaves. In the spring the fungus becomes active and produces spores (fungus seeds) that are carried about by air currents. These spores lodge on the iris leaves, germinate and produce infection.

From the spots produced by this initial infection, more spores are produced which results in further infection. This cycle continues as long as there is wet weather. Infection is checked during dry weather since moisture is required for spore germination and infection.

CONTROL

1. The collection and destruction of all dead leaves in the fall or early spring will help reduce the severity of this disease.

2. Spraying is a protective measure. The spray material should be applied before infection takes place. The first spray should be made when the leaves are about half grown. Spray every two weeks until the first of July. Usually after this time the weather is too dry for much leaf spot development.

The following compounds are recommended:

Captan - 2 tablespoonsful per gallon of water.

Zineb - 2 tablespoonsful per gallon of water.

A copper containing compound such as Bordeaux mixture, applied as recommended by manufacturer.

You should add a spreading agent to the spray solution if one is not already incorporated in the packaged product. Excellent spreaders are the common household detergents. Add one teaspoonful of liquid or powdered detergent to each gallon of spray solution. The spray material will all run off the leaves as droplets unless a detergent has been added.