

Disease Fact Sheet

Bacterial Canker *Genus: Clavibacter michiganensis*

What is it?

Bacterial Canker is a plant disease caused by the bacterium *Clavibacter michiganensis*, which primarily affects tomatoes. It is highly contagious and spreads rapidly in greenhouses or field environments.

How is it transmitted?

It spreads through sap-to-sap contact, contaminated tools, equipment, and soil

What symptoms to look for?

Leaves: Wilted, yellowing, or browning leaves.

The margins of the leaves may have brown edges or "scorch" marks. **Stems:** Dark streaks or lesions on the stem. Open cankers (cracks or splits) that may ooze.

Fruit: Small white or yellow spots with dark centres, often called "bird's eye spots."

Information compiled from
GROWER 2 GROWER 

Impact

Bacterial Canker is a serious problem for tomato growers and can lead to major crop loss. Once a plant is infected, there is no cure, making prevention and careful management crucial.

Where is it present?

North America, Europe, Asia, Oceania, Africa, South America

How can I protect my plants?

Isolate the affected rows, use tape to restrict access, limit staff access, wear protective clothing and change often. Clean hands often and use hand gel at the greenhouse entrance, use separate equipment, remove infected plants and dispose of, and disinfect between plants and spray paths using 1-2% sodium hypochlorite solution ensuring ventilation to avoid plant damage. **Tips for healthy plants:** Increase humidity during the day by reducing side vent openings. This helps older plants cope better in summer. Growers should consult with their horticultural suppliers for management advice.



