

BENOMYL AND LARGE NEMATODES

Jay S. Koths

Extension Floriculturist

and

Carl A. Salsedo

Extension Agent—Horticulture

Benomyl has been reported to control earthworms. The Phylum Annelidae includes earthworms, sea-worms and segmented worms. If benomyl is toxic to earthworms, will it control large nematodes?

Very frequently, geraniums which have become afflicted with various cutting rots become infested with large nematodes (Figure 1). These nematodes may be present in propagation benches and in the greenhouse soil or are transferred into greenhouses on infested stock.

These large saprophytic nematodes, visible to the naked eye and up to 1/4 inch long, are not thought to be plant eaters but rather injest organic soil particles

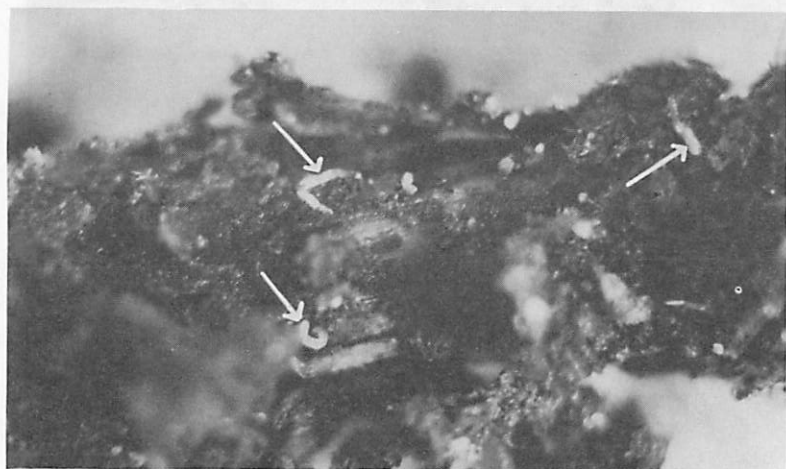


Figure 1. Large nematodes on a diseased geranium.

and fungi. They are not considered pathogenic to plants although it appears that the base of a freshly cut geranium cutting might be attacked if other food sources are depleted. At any rate, these nematodes congregate at the base of geranium cuttings and appear to foster rotting of the basal portion. Any damage to the basal part of a cutting seems to make it a more favorable habitat.

To determine the effect of benomyl, 4 pots of geraniums infested with nematodes were treated with benomyl at 1200 ppm, 200 ml. applied to each 4-inch pot. On examination after six days, no effective control was obtained.

It is our conclusion that benomyl is not very effective against nematodes of the type that were found on geranium cuttings.

Literature Cited

- Tomlin, A.D. and F.L. Gore. 1974. Effects of six insecticides and a fungicide on the numbers and biomass of earthworms in pasture.

ATTEND THE GREENHOUSE SHORT COURSE

NOVEMBER 6