

Carnation Bud Rot
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There has been some increase in the occurrence of bud rot in carnations in the Denver area during recent weeks. This disease is one about which we need much more information than is available at present.

The disease is recognized by the rotting of the buds before the blooms open. The interior of the infected bud is brown, decayed, and usually moldy; the outer parts of such a bud, however, may appear to be almost normal. If petals emerge at all, they are distorted and unsalable.

Bud rot is caused by the fungus, Fusarium poae, a relative of the wilt Fusarium. It is unique in that the spores, and sometimes part of the mycelium (the vegetative structure) may be carried by the mite, Pediculopsis graminum. There is also a possibility that thrips may enter the relationship serving as agents for dissemination.

This species of the Fusarium fungus, like its wilt-inducing cousin, prefers relatively high temperatures (above 70°F.). On the other hand, it prefers moist conditions, seldom occurring where the air is dry. Little is known of its varietal preference, but circumstantial evidence indicates it has an avid appetite for almost any carnation variety.

In greenhouses which are free from weeds (internally and externally), and in which the humidity is kept as low as possible it is difficult for insect vectors or Fusarium to survive. All plant debris which is infested with the disease should be eliminated by burning. The spread of bud rot often can be checked by picking and burning infected buds as soon as they are observed.

A good insect control program is as imperative in the control of bud rot as is sanitation. Parathion has been reported to eliminate both the mite and thrip very efficiently.