

Botrytis management: best practice guidelines

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Like all good disease management, control should be focused on integrating a number of different practices rather than just relying on one particular method.

- Ensure your canopy is open to make sure it dries out quickly after wet periods, thereby reducing potential time for infection to occur.
- Manage canopies to provide an open fruit zone for spray application and sunlight interception as shading promotes a thinner berry cuticle increasing fruit susceptibility to Botrytis.
- Aim to produce small open bunches as tight bunches create a microclimate favourable to Botrytis, have more contact points between berries leading to rubbing (flawed epicuticular wax) and is difficult for sprays to penetrate.
- Monitor nutritional status, particularly nitrogen levels, with petiole analyses, in particular minimise nitrogen inputs and maximise calcium content of plant tissues.
- Schedule botryticides through the use of infection period forecasting services.
- Calibrate sprayer in order to deliver a lethal chemical dose to flowers and bunches.
- Since Botrytis preferentially infects damaged or dying tissue, growers need to identify practices that damage bunches and eliminate them. Controlling other pests, such as LBAM, and pathogens is integral to Botrytis management as pests cause damage to bunches that enable a Botrytis infection to establish.