Strawberry Viruses

There are several virus diseases that can affect strawberry. They occur rarely or infrequently, but transmission via imported cuttings can occur. This fall, we have seen suspect viruses in planting stock.

The viruses strawberry mottle virus (SMoV) and strawberry mild yellow edge virus (SMYEV) have been an infrequent problem in strawberry production in the past. Introduction typically occurs from infected plugs. Once infected plants are confirmed, these diseases can have devastating effects.

Viruses result in systemic infections, meaning that all parts of the plant are infected. All infected material should be removed and destroyed. There are no treatment methods for infected plants, so prevention of additional infections is critical.

SMoV and SMYEV FACTS:

- Symptoms can include chlorosis (Figure 1), leaf distortion, marginal leaf scorch (Figure 2), and red or orange coloration.
- Infected plants may be stunted or show decline after planting.
- Yield loss can also result from virus infection.
- These viruses are transmitted by aphids.
- SMYEV infects only strawberry, but SMoV can also infect the weed, common lambsquarters.

DISEASE PREVENTION TECHNIQUES:

- Begin with clean plant material purchased from a reputable source.
- Remove any diseased plant as soon as possible.
- Scout regularly for symptomatic plants.
- Manage aphid populations.
- Implement a weed management program.
For more information, call the Pulaski County Extension office at 679-6361 and request IPM Scouting Guide for Common Problems of Strawberry in Kentucky (ID-238). Like Pulaski County Horticulture on Facebook, follow @hortagentbeth on Twitter, and kyplants on Instagram.

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Figure 1: Chlorosis of leaf tissue as a result of strawberry mottle virus (Photo: John Strang, UK)
Figure 2: Marginal leaf scorch is one possible symptom of strawberry mild yellow edge virus. (Photo: Nicole Ward Gauthier, UK)