

INDUSTRY ADVICE

Cucumber green mottle mosaic virus

November 2014

Current Situation

An incursion of the plant disease *Cucumber green mottle mosaic virus* (CGMMV) was reported in a watermelon crop in the Northern Territory in late October 2014. Since then several melon farms in the Darwin and Katherine area have been confirmed as having CGMMV.

The Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries has put into place strict containment strategies and control measures for the movement of watermelons out of the controlled areas.

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has also introduced legislation in line with other jurisdictions limiting the movement of watermelon and other cucurbit host plants, plant material, soil that has contained host plant material, used equipment and packaging.

Producers are encouraged to be vigilant of existing crops and also be aware of the possibility of introducing infected plant material, machinery or packaging to their properties.

What is CGMMV?

CGMMV is a serious and easily transmitted disease which causes significant damage to fruit rendering it unsaleable.

This disease produces a range of symptoms on watermelon leaves and fruit with severity of symptoms dependent on variety.

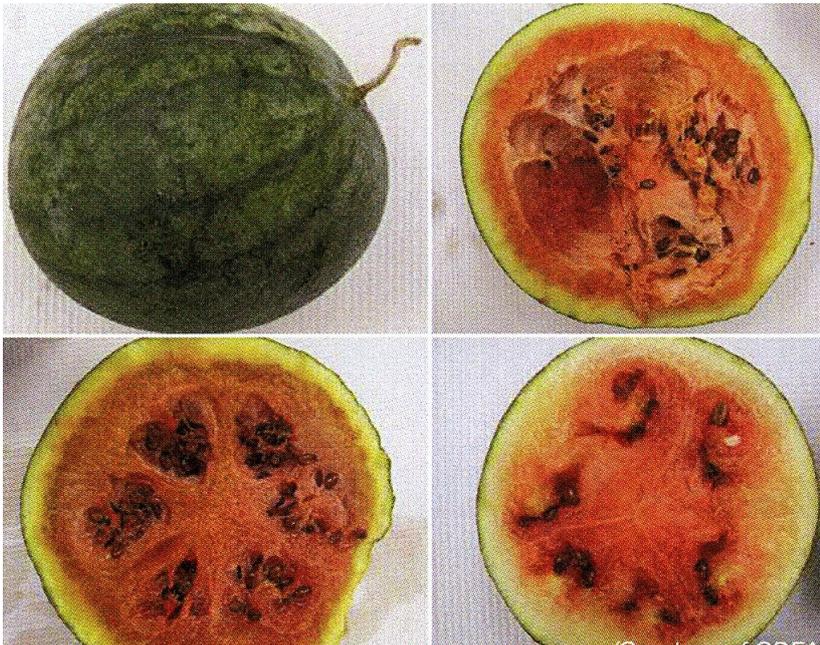
Leaves of infected plants take on a mosaic like mottling and, in some cases, are bleached of colour. Plants begin to wilt and die as the disease progresses.

Figure 1 Leaf mottling – image courtesy of Barry Conde NT Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries.



On fruit the pinkish red flesh of the watermelon can yellow or develop internal cavities with areas becoming soft and mushy. Some fruit develops abnormally.

Figure 2 External and internal symptoms of severe CGMMV on watermelon – image courtesy of California Department of Food and Agriculture.



What plants does CGMMV affect?

This disease affects plants or plant parts (fruit, seeds, leaves, stems and cuttings) of the cucurbit family including:

cucumber	pumpkin
watermelon	bottle gourd
zucchini	bitter gourd
squash	other melons

How is the disease spread?

CGMMV is easily spread when infected plant material comes into contact with healthy plant material. Spread can also occur through contaminated machinery, clothing, equipment, soil, water and packaging material. The disease is also transmitted through infected seed, transplants and rootstock.

Stopping the spread into NSW

NSW DPI has introduced legislation to stop the movement of plant material of the cucurbit family, machinery, and packaging from the controlled areas in the Northern Territory.

To bring cucurbit host plants or parts of plants (fruit, seeds, leaves, stems and cuttings), used agricultural machinery and used packaging into NSW the following applies:

- must have originated in a state or territory or a part of that state or territory that has a valid certificate of area freedom for CGMMV in force. This certificate is provided by the state or territory authority.

If an area freedom certificate is not in force to bring plant material, used machinery and used packaging into NSW the following applies:

- must have originated from a property that is located outside a CGMMV control area and has been tested and found free of the disease in the 12 months prior to movement into NSW and must be accompanied by a Plant Health Certificate issued by the state or territory authority stating the above requirements have been met.

What to do on farm

Be aware of the source of any host plant material being brought on farm and comply with biosecurity legislation.

Be highly vigilant of all host crops as symptoms can develop rapidly.

Use good on farm hygiene by placing restrictions on the movement of vehicles, machinery, packaging, clothing and footwear between properties.

Retailers

Retailers should check consignments from interstate and ensure that accompanying documentation is valid.

What to do if you think you may have found CGMMV

Suspected detections of CGMMV should be reported immediately to NSW DPI.

- call the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on **1800 084 881**

Warning

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (November 2014). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

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