CONTROL OF FLOWER BLIGHT OF MACADAMIA NUT

Description
The disease is caused by the fungus *Botrytis cinerea*. The disease is also known as raceme blight or blossom blight. *Botrytis cinerea* infects numerous plant species and forms dark resting structures called sclerotia, which survive for many months. *Botrytis* is common on old flower parts of many plant species and decaying vegetation. Spores are dispersed by wind. Infection and disease developments are favoured by cool, wet weather. Flower blight is a minor disease but can occasionally cause severe failure in fruit set if prolonged periods of showery weather occur during the flowering period.

Symptoms of attack
- The first symptoms of infection are small brown, small dead spots on green or white florets.
- Infection is only on senescent flower parts, with no evidence of infection of immature buds.
- An entire raceme may become blighted in just a few days under cool, wet conditions, turning brown to dark brown.
- Infected racemes may bend completely at the tip end.
Necrotic flower parts may remain attached to the flower stalk and become covered by a mass of grey to black fungal growth. Young nuts are not usually blighted and are considered to increase in resistance with maturation.

**How to control blight of macadamia**

- Remove and burn or bury infected plant parts to reduce disease especially during the nut bearing time.
- Improve air circulation around the plants by spacing plants widely and pruning leaves for adequate airflow and speedy drying of the vegetation.
- Apply a fungicide such as Captan, Chlorothalonil (Daconil), Copper, Iprodione, mancozeb at 5–10% bloom and at full bloom.
- Get other control products from the PCPB (www.pcpb.or.ke) list of registered pest control products, and use them according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

If the problem persists, seek immediate technical support from KALRO Centre nearest you.

Other quick sources of help
1. Plant clinic nearest you
2. County agriculture office nearest you
3. Write to: info@kalro.org and we will get in touch.

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