

Bunchy top is the most damaging disease of banana in the Mariana Islands.

KEY FACTS

- BBTV is a major disease in all banana-producing regions.
- Bunchy top disease is caused by the Banana bunch top virus (BBTV) and is spread by the banana aphid and infected planting materials (e.g. suckers).
- Banana plants can be infected for up to 4 months before symptoms appear.
- Once infected, the virus spreads to all parts of the banana mat through the corms and suckers.
- There is no known cure for BBTV. BBTV-infected plants cannot recover and should be removed to prevent further spread.
- BBTV infection can be confirmed by ELISA test.

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for disease-free planting materials

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Banana Bunchy Top Disease

Managing Bunchy Top disease
in your field or home garden.

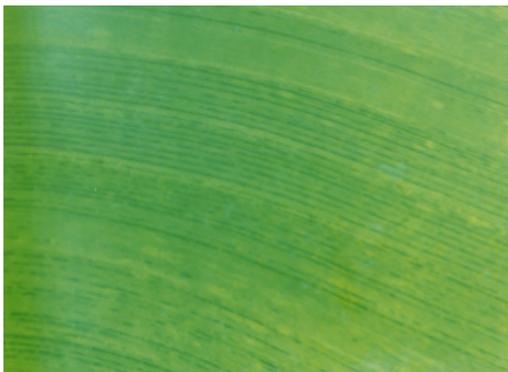




Leaf veins develop a hooked appearance where they connect to the mid-rib.



Adult banana aphid can transmit BBTV from infected plant to healthy plant.



Morse-code, dot-and-dash pattern on BBTV-infected leaf.



Bunchy top or choked collar of leaves. Leaves are narrow and shortened with yellow margins.



Mottled or streaked appearance can extend to inflorescence, if produced.

CONTROL OF BUNCHY TOP DISEASE BASED ON 4 STEPS

1. Remove sources of virus and banana aphid

Taro, ginger and heliconia are alternative hosts for the banana aphid and BBTV virus. Do not plant these near banana.

2. Control for aphids

Use insecticidal soaps or commercial insecticides to kill aphids. Follow label instructions. Spray only the whorl and upper part of the trunk.

3. Destroy infected plants

Make a hole in the trunk with a screwdriver or awl, then spray or pour concentrated glyphosate (or other herbicide) into the hole.

4. Remove diseased mat

After 6-8 weeks, the herbicide should kill all plants/plantlets through the underground connections. Dig out the dead plants and underground corm to avoid re-sprouting.

Re-plant only with disease-free planting materials.