

Welcome to this Mid-week alert for Gummy Stem Blight as part of our UF/IFAS Extension Suwannee Valley Watermelon Crop Update. These updates are summarized by Bob Hochmuth with input from Suwannee Valley Extension Agents: Mark Warren (Levy), Tyler Pittman (Gilchrist), Tatiana Sanchez (Alachua), Luke Harlow (Union), Jay Capasso (Columbia), Dan Fenneman (Madison), Keith Wynn (Hamilton), Danielle Sprague (Jefferson), Emily Beach (Lafayette), Amanda Phillips (Suwannee), Kevin Athearn (RSA-Agri- business), and Sudeep Sidhu (RSA- Water Resources).

If you know someone who wants to be added to this weekly notice, contact your Extension Agent or Mark Warren (352-949-8288) if you want to be added to the regional watermelon group text app.

Thank You to the 2022 Suwannee Valley Rapid Diagnostic Watermelon Program and Its Industry Sponsors. Syngenta Crop Protection, Glades Crop Care, TriEst Ag Group, Gowan USA, Summit Agro-USA, and Harrell's Fertilizer for sponsoring this effort. Other industry reps interested in sponsoring this effort can contact Bob Hochmuth at bobhoch@ufl.edu or 386-288-6301.

Gummy Stem Blight

Even though we have not seen much disease activity up to this point, we are becoming more concerned about gummy stem blight. Most samples submitted over the past two weeks for foliar disease ID have come back with gummy stem blight as the main pathogen. The multiple rainstorms over the past several days could certainly set the stage for gummy stem blight to be more active and potentially a major concern if gummy stem blight is already present. Of course, not all fields even have gummy, so, make sure you know the situations in your fields. We also know we can move gummy stem blight spores on workers in the fields once we start harvests, especially if fields are wet.

We have some guidance to share if gummy stem blight is a concern in your fields. Research at Universities in the southeastern US, including UF/IFAS consistently rank Inspire Super in the top performer category for gummy stem blight, but it has a 7 day preharvest interval (PHI). So, if you have 7 days before your next harvest, Inspire Super is your #1 choice. However, if you have already sprayed Inspire Super or are at less than 7 days to next harvest, what should you use? In those cases, Aprovia Top would be a good option. Aprovia Top has performed

very similarly to Inspire Super in most trials, and has a 0 day PHI on the label. The main caution is that both Inspire Super and Aprovia Top have FRAC group 3 fungicides in their ingredients, so we want to minimize the number of applications of these two in rotation. If gummy stem blight is not present in your fields, then mancozeb and tebuconazole is a good option at a lower cost than the other options above. Keep in mind Aprovia Top is a great option, if needed during the harvest season. (Bob Hochmuth and Mathews Paret).