Phytophthora management in Papaya

Phytophthora thrives in warm, wet conditions. Good drainage and avoiding prlonged periods of saturation are the foundation of disease management

What you can't control:

1 Rainfall Growers can't control how much rain falls or how long wet conditions persist

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What you can control:

1 Fallow period

Aim for at least four years between papaya crops using a non-susceptible fallow. Recommended crops include sorghum and brassicas.



2 Paddock preparation

Paddock selection

If possible, avoid low-lying paddocks, heavy soils, area that hold water and paddocks with history of disease.

Paddock preparation

Prepare the paddock so water drains freely and does not pond for prolonged periods. Install drains where necessary.

Mounding

Single mounds at least 70cm high have been shown to reduce phytophthora incidence. If using double rows, ensure water does not pond in the middle



3 Planting out

Aim to plant only healthy nursery stock. Infected seedlings can introduce phytophthora to a clean paddock earlier.

Apply metalaxyl in a 40 cm band along the centre of the row to newly planted crops. Water in after application.

4 In-crop care

Avoid prolonged soil saturation – disease risk increases the longer the root zone remains saturated or near-saturated.

Apply phosphorous acid fortnightly as a foliar spray, or through fertigation where foliar uptake may be limited.

Apply copper fungicides at 10–14 day intervals when conditions favour Phytophthora fruit rot.

Permit sources: PER14417 & PER14490. Factsheet produced by PP23003. Information correct as of September 2026. Always read the label before applying a product

Hort Innovation PAPAYA FUND

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