



Myrtle Rust Biosecurity guidelines for growers in the Australian Tea Tree Industry

Chris Anderson¹ and Tony Larkman²

1. Industry and Investment NSW 2. Australian Tea Tree Industry Association

Myrtle rust (*Uredo rangelii*) is a serious threat to all plants in the Myrtaceae family including *Melaleuca alternifolia*. The rust has potential to threaten sustainable tea tree production in Australia and industry personnel should take precautions to minimise the spread of the disease on plantation and throughout the industry. The following biosecurity guidelines will assist in preventing the spread Myrtle rust on and between plantations:

General

- » Familiarise yourself with signs of Myrtle rust on *Melaleuca* and other hosts (see over page)
- » Conduct regular inspections of plantings for signs of Myrtle rust and keep records of all inspections
- » Train all staff, and contractors to familiarise them with symptoms of Myrtle rust and display posters in workshops and offices to ensure staff remain vigilant
- » Report all suspected Myrtle rust to the Exotic Plant Pest hotline on **1800 084 881**.

Vehicles, Equipment and Machinery

Cars, spray rigs, trucks, harvesters and collection bins are high risk items that may introduce Myrtle rust onto your plantation. Biosecurity starts at the plantation gate! **Come clean go clean!**

- » Designate your plantation as a '**Myrtle Rust Clean Zone**'
- » **COME CLEAN** - Do not allow people, machinery, vehicles or equipment onto your plantation unless thoroughly cleaned prior to entry
- » **GO CLEAN** - Ensure all vehicles, machinery and equipment is cleaned before moving off your plantation and between blocks or paddocks
- » Create a wash down pad away from production zones preferably on gravel or cement with access to high pressure water for decontamination of vehicles and machinery. Ensure all water run off is contained in an evaporation sump adjacent to the pad
- » Machinery and vehicles should be cleaned with a decontaminant like Castrol Farmcleanse* and high pressure water in a designated wash down area. Apply 10% Farmcleanse using a knapsack sprayer to all external surfaces of the vehicle or machinery and leave it to soak for at least 10 minutes. Wash the decontaminant off with high pressure water and ensure the wash down pad is left in a clean state
- » Use a designated plantation vehicle to transport visitors and contractors around your plantation
- » Do not share equipment between properties.

People

- » Myrtle rust is spread on people!
- » Industry personnel should launder clothing including hats and gloves before moving between plantations
- » Alternatively wear disposable hats overalls and gloves that are changed between plantations and ensure boots and any equipment is cleaned and sprayed with 70% ethanol* following use
- » Create designated parking areas away from production zones and keep records of visitor movements
- » Limit visitor contact with production areas unless appropriate biosecurity measures have been followed.

Signage

- » Display signs at your front gate/parking area advising visitors that your plantation is a '**Myrtle Rust Clean Zone**' and that all visitors should ensure clothing, vehicles and equipment is clean before entering your property. Include information on the location of wash down facilities, designated parking areas and contact details and requirements to register all visits with the plantation office.

Source Material

- » Only purchase planting material from source properties that have been regularly inspected and found free of Myrtle rust
- » Use only ATTIA accredited nurseries for propagation of seed.

* Always follow label directions, ensure you read the manufacturers material safety data sheet and complete a risk assessment before using chemicals.

What plants can be infected with Myrtle rust?

This fungal disease causes infections on plants in the Myrtaceae family. Affected plants include willow myrtle (*Agonis*), turpentine (*Syncarpia*), bottlebrush (*Callistemon*), scrub turpentine (*Rhodamnia*), broad-leaved paperbark (*Melaleuca*), *Austromyrtus* 'Aurora' and 'Blushing Beauty'.

New growth of soft plant material is the most vulnerable to infection.

Myrtle rust on *M. alternifolia*

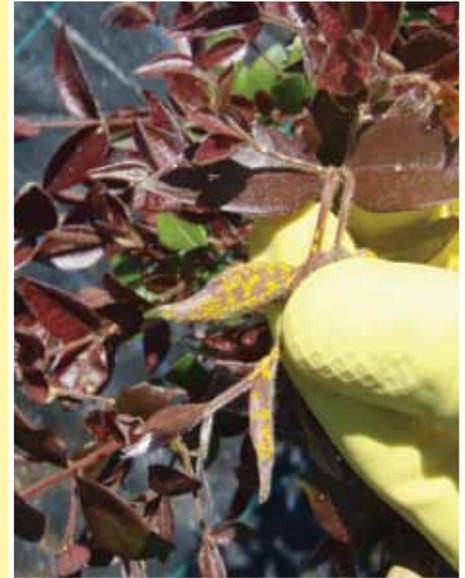
Photo courtesy CSIRO



Melaleuca quinquenervia infected leaf



Austromyrtus infected leaf

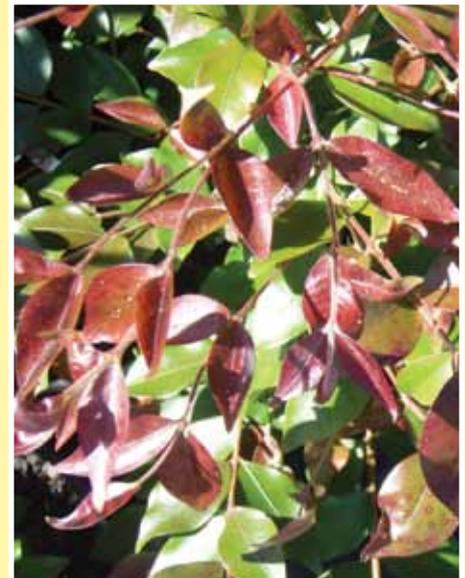


Myrtle rust on *M. alternifolia*

Photo courtesy CSIRO



Melaleuca plant with fresh infection



Austromyrtus with older infection

For more information see: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/info/myrtlerust

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Myrtle Rust Biosecurity guidelines for contractors in the Australian Tea Tree Industry

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Myrtle rust (*Uredo rangelii*) is a serious threat to all plants in the Myrtaceae family including *Melaleuca alternifolia*. The rust has potential to threaten sustainable tea tree production in Australia and industry personnel including contractors should take precautions to minimise the spread of the disease on plantation and throughout the industry. If you move frequently between plantations, there is a risk that you may spread Myrtle rust on your clothing, vehicles, machinery and equipment. Biosecurity and hygiene is the key!

There are several steps that you as a contractor can take to minimise the risk of spreading Myrtle rust onto Tea Tree plantations:

General

- » Familiarise yourself with signs of Myrtle rust on *Melaleuca* and other hosts
- » Report all suspected Myrtle rust to the Exotic Plant Pest hotline on **1800 084 881**

Vehicles, Equipment and Machinery

- » **COME CLEAN** – Always clean down your vehicles, machinery and equipment before entry onto a Tea Tree plantation.
- » **GO CLEAN** - Ensure all vehicles, machinery and equipment is cleaned before leaving a plantation and between blocks or paddocks. Use the wash down facility provided on the plantation. If no facility exists, use a truck wash or other wash down facility nearby before moving onto a new Tea Tree plantation
- » Machinery, vehicles and equipment (eg. haul out bins, harvesters, cars) should be cleaned with a decontaminant like Castrol Farmcleanse* and high pressure water. Apply 10% Farmcleanse using a knapsack sprayer to all external surfaces of the vehicle or machinery and leave it to soak for at least 10 minutes. Wash the decontaminant off with high pressure water and ensure the wash down facility is left in a clean state
- » Consider carrying a knapsack of decontaminant in your vehicle
- » Use a designated plantation vehicle to move around plantations where possible.

People

- » Myrtle rust is spread on people!
- » Contractors should launder clothing including hats and gloves before moving between plantations
- » Alternatively wear disposable hats overalls and gloves that are changed between plantations and ensure boots and any equipment is sprayed with decontaminant and washed following use
- » Always contact the plantation manager before entering a property and observe all biosecurity requirements including decontamination of vehicles and completion of visitor logs.

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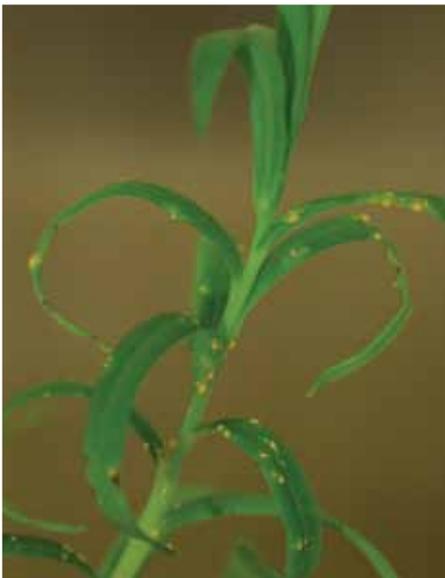
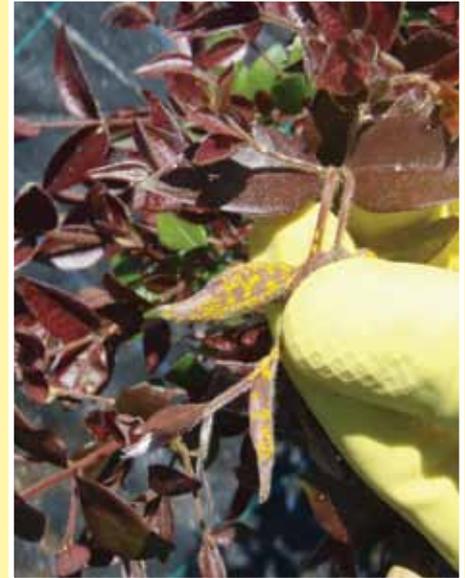
Photo courtesy CSIRO



Melaleuca quinquenervia infected leaf



Austromyrtus infected leaf

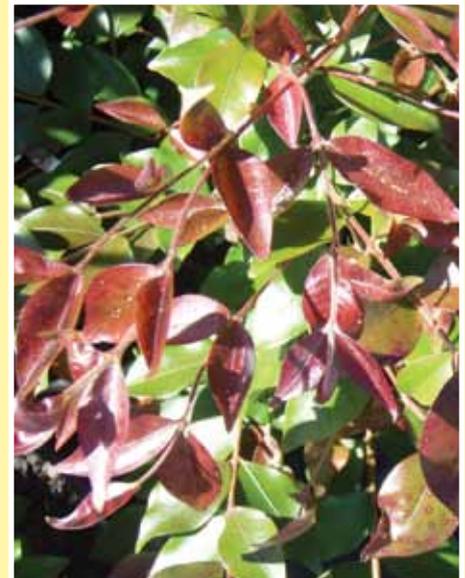


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