

Crown gall

Agrobacterium tumefaciens (bacterium)

Crown gall is an occasional problem in propagation beds and new plantings, but is seldom seen in mature plantings.

Symptoms. Galls are most common at the bases of canes or on major roots, but they occasionally form on branches higher in the bush. Young galls are cream-colored to light brown; they turn dark brown to black, rough, and hard with age. Infected plants are stunted and weak.

Disease cycle. The soil-borne bacteria enter natural or mechanical wounds on stems and roots and induce gall formation. The disease is less of a problem in acid soils.

Management. Plant disease-free nursery stock in non-infested soils; grow grasses or vegetables in infested fields for at least 2 to 3 years; remove and burn infected plants; minimize wounding; sterilize pruners; dip plants in a suspension of *A. radiobacter* strain K84 before planting.

