

Problem: Peony, Powdery Mildew (*Erysiphe polygoni*)



Host Plants: Peony

Description: Powdery mildew starts as individual spots that resemble snowflakes but rapidly coalesce to cover the entire leaf so that a plant look like it was dusted with flour. Though common on other plants such as lilac and bee balm, it has been relatively rare on peony until the last few years.

Recommendations: Poor air movement and shade make the disease more likely. Growing peonies in full sun with good air movement will help minimize the disease. Fungicides can be effective if applied before infection has occurred. Therefore, heavily infected plants should not be treated as the treatment will be ineffective. Fortunately, the disease should cause no lasting damage to the plant.

Remove and discard (or compost) infected plant material at the end of the season. Look for individual spots to appear the following spring and then apply a recommended fungicide before the disease has spread. Suggested fungicides include myclobutanil (Eagle, Spectracide Immunox, Monterey Fungi-Maxx, Fertilome F-Stop Lawn & Garden Fungicide), propiconazole (Banner MAXX, Fertilome Liquid Systemic Fungicide, Bonide Infuse Systemic Disease Control) or tebuconazole (BioAdvanced Disease Control for Roses, Flowers & Shrubs).

References:

1. [Powdery Mildew in the Flower Garden](#), University of Minnesota Extension
2. [Peony Powdery Mildew](#), University of Illinois Extension, Home, Yard & Garden Pest Newsletter, July 16, 2010

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