

THERE IS WIDESPREAD INTEREST & CONCERN

Myrtle Rust (*Puccinia psidii*)

The recent Myrtle Rust outbreak discovered in Kerikeri has naturally caused widespread interest and concern among our customers with current orders for Pohutukawa and those planting Manuka and Kanuka, but to this point we have been fortunate that none is present on our properties.

We have put together a few notes on the disease for your reference.



Myrtle Rust found in Kerikeri in early May is of grave concern with respect to our New Zealand native and some exotic species and the communities involved with both.

Myrtle Rust, also known as Eucalypt or Guava Rust has been present in Australia since 2010. It is spreading rapidly there causing tree deaths at severely high rates in some species and some Australian States have declared it impossible to eradicate.



In NZ it is expected to impact our native Pohutukawa and Rata (*Metrosideros* genus), Manuka (*Leptospermum*), Kanuka (*Kunzea ericioides*) and *Syzygium*, as well as popular exotics, Feijoa and Guava, with the potential for extensive damage. Fears are held for greatest damage in the more northern regions of both NZ and Australia.

A fungal disease, Myrtle Rust is likely to have originated in South America where it is an endemic pathogen of Myrtaceae plants and also infects eucalypt plantations. It is windborne, and contagious.

It manifests as a yellow spotted fungus on the foliage of affected trees. Fungicides are used to control it.

Plant species susceptible to Myrtle Rust (Myrtaceous species) include Pohutukawa, Manuka, Rata, Kanuka, Swamp Maire, Feijoa, Guava, the *Acmena* family, and *Eucalyptus* trees.

All plant producers such as takana are on high alert, checking stock daily. MPI urges us to be vigilant, not to touch any suspected infected material, and to isolate our stocks of the affected species and use fungicides as a precaution.

For customers seeking alternatives to the species affected, takana has large stocks of a wide range of natives which can be used as substitutes until the NZ position becomes clearer. We have hardy northern coastal options such as Coastal Maire (*Nestegis apetala*) and Ewekuri (*Streblus banksii*), among many others. Check our website for the full range and specific environmental conditions suggested for many of them.

At takana native trees, we're always glad to provide free advice for your specific application. Please feel welcome to call and ask. We ship to Canterbury by the container load so we try to accommodate any request – even for a single specimen. Visit us in the north at 102 Omaha Flats Road, Matakana. Call us on 0800 TAKANA. or email: don@takana.co.nz