SWEETPOTATO (*Ipomoea batatas* 'Covington')
Black rot; *Ceratocystis fimbriata*

H. Collins, Y. I. Rosado-Rivera, and L. M. Quesada-Ocampo
Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology and Plant Sciences Initiative
North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC 27695

Evaluation of fungicides for postharvest management of black rot of sweetpotato, 2022.

This experiment was conducted at the Central Crops Research Station in Clayton, NC. Sweetpotato roots used in the study were grown at the Cunningham Research Station in Kinston, NC and were rinsed with water prior to use. Roots were previously cured and were selected based upon similar size, shape, and disease-free appearance. The experiment was started on 15 Sept. A spore suspension was created by dislodging ascospores from cultures of *Ceratocystis fimbriata* isolate AS186 grown on 100-mm agar plates and adding them to 190 L of water. The approximate concentration of the spore suspension was 1.0 x 10^3 spores/ml. Sweetpotatoes were placed into a 379-L bin containing the spore suspension. The spore suspension, along with the roots, were gently agitated for 20 min to ensure a homogenous solution throughout the inoculation. Following inoculation, roots were taken out of the spore suspension and allowed to air dry. Roots were then placed onto a packing line and fungicide spray treatments were applied using a compressed air pressurized sprayer delivering 0.5 gal/2,000 lb of roots at 20 psi with four TG-1 full cone nozzles. Sweetpotatoes used for the nontreated control were inoculated and sprayed with water on the packing line. Enough product was used to ensure complete coverage of each sweetpotato. After fungicide application, sweetpotatoes were placed into clear, plastic containers (40 x 50 x 17.9 cm) and stored at 24ºC and 99% relative humidity for 28 days. Five replications per treatment were included with 5 roots per replication. Roots were rated for disease incidence (number of lesions on each root per box) and disease severity (percent area covered in lesions) at 7, 14, 21, and 28 days after inoculation on 22 and 29 Sept, and 6 and 13 Oct. Data were analyzed in the software ARM (Gylling Data Management, Brookings, SD) using analysis of variance (AOV) and Fisher's Protected LSD test (P=0.05) to separate means.

Black rot was first observed 7 days after inoculation. All treatments significantly lowered disease incidence and severity on all rating dates compared to the nontreated control. No phytotoxicity was observed in any treatment. In the table, treatments are sorted by Disease Incidence on 13 Oct.

	Disease Incidence[z]				Disease Severity[y]			
Treatment Name and Rate	22 Sept	29 Sept	6 Oct	13 Oct	22 Sept	29 Sept	6 Oct	13 Oct
Nontreated	3.2 a[x]	5.9 a	6.0 a	5.6 a	1.0 a	4.5 a	6.6 a	9.5 a
Stadium	0.0 b	0.3 b	0.4 b	0.2 b	0.0 b	0.3 b	0.4 b	0.2 b
Mertect Academy	0.1 b	0.2 b	0.4 b	0.2 b	0.1 b	0.2 b	0.4 b	0.2 b
Mertect Graduate A+	0.1 b	0.1 b	0.2 b	0.2 b	0.0 b	0.1 b	0.2 b	0.2 b

[z] Disease incidence was calculated by the number of lesions on each sweetpotato.
[y] Disease severity was calculated by the percentage of area covered by black rot lesions on each sweetpotato.
[x] Treatments followed by the same letter(s) within a column are not statistically different (P=0.05, Fisher's Protected LSD).