

Problem: Rhubarb Crown Rot - *Phytophthora spp.*

Host Plants: Rhubarb

Description: Affected plants fail to leaf out in the spring, or they may leaf out only to die abruptly. Other plants may be spindly and produce few leaves. When you dig the plants up, the roots and crowns are rotted. Several pathogens, including soft rot bacteria, and fungi such as Pythium and Phytophthora, may be associated with the decline.

Recommendations: In order to avoid crown rot problems, start with crowns selected from healthy beds. Purchase new crowns instead of getting starts from a neighbor.

Rhubarb must be planted in an area with well-drained soil. You may have to 'hill' the plants slightly to prevent water from collecting around the crown. If you have heavy, clay-type soils, avoiding this disease may be extremely difficult. Fungicide drenches have been relatively ineffective in controlling crown rot.

References:

1. [Rhubarb](#), Kansas State University, KSU Horticulture Report EP99

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