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Poinsettia Nutrient Deficiencies: Some look the same

Last Greenhouse IPM alert, Andrew Ristvey wrote about molybdenum deficiencies in poinsettias. This week, a poinsettia grower sent us photos of a symptom that looked a lot like molybdenum deficiency (chlorotic leaves, green veins, cupped edges). We are seeing these symptoms from growers in Maryland and even in Ohio. Dr. Will Healy, Retired-Ball Horticultural Company, pointed out that the chlorosis in these crops is more evenly spread throughout the leaf as opposed to spotting between the veins, and also that the chlorotic leaves are mainly on the new growth instead of spread throughout the plant. The absence of spotty chlorosis paired with it being present mainly on new growth are actually symptoms of sulfur deficiency. Many popular poinsettia fertilizers do not contain sulfur or may have too low of a sulfur concentration to suffice for this plant. Since we have been seeing this on more than one crop/cultivar, it would be worthwhile for growers to check their fertilizers or nutrient levels to avoid being stuck with chlorotic poinsettias at time of sale.

If you have problems with low sulfur levels in your growing media you can add Epsom salts as a drench at 1-2 pounds per 100 gallons of water. Check out this [e-Gro Alert article](#) if you would like to read more about sulfur deficiencies & Epsom salt remedies.



Monitor poinsettia crops for chlorotic leaves, green veins, and cupped edges that are symptoms of sulfur deficiency.
Photo: Ben Beale, UME



**Close-up of sulfur deficiency on poinsettia.
Photo: Ben Beale, UME**

Conferences: Go to the [IPMnet Conference Page](#) for links and details on these programs.

December 8, 2023

Advanced IPM Conference

Location: Carroll Community College, Westminster, MD

Details coming in early November

January 10-12, 2024

MANTS

Location: Baltimore Convention Center

February 8, 2024

25th Anniversary - Manor View Farm & The Perennial Farm Education Seminar

Location: Valley Mansion, Cockeysville MD

Speakers: John Stanley (Green Industry International Business Consultant), Vinnie Simone (Planting Fields Arboretum, NY), Janet Draper (Smithsonian Gardens) & Stanton Gill (UMD Extension)

Registration information available soon.

February 14, 2024

Eastern Shore Pest Management Conference

Location: Wicomico Civic Center, Salisbury, MD

Information and Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-eastern-shore-pest-management-conference-tickets-726283502507?aff=oddtcreator>

February 15 and 16, 2024

Chesapeake Green Horticulture Conference

Location: Maritime Institute, Linthicum Heights, MD

February 29 and March 1, 2024

Biological Control Conference for Greenhouses, Nurseries, and Landscapes

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

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