

Disinfesting Potato Storage and Equipment

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Careful cleaning and disinfestation of potato storage and handling equipment is effective in preventing the spread of pathogens inciting contagious diseases such as ring rot. Cleaning and disinfesting surfaces that seed potatoes come into contact with will reduce the potential for spread of the causal agents of ring rot, black leg and other soft rotting bacteria. Surfaces contaminated with residual spores of many fungal diseases are also sanitized by effective disinfestation practice. Effective sanitation requires a thorough cleaning of all surfaces before a disinfestant is applied. Soil, clay particles and organic material quickly neutralize the biocidal properties of most disinfestant materials available for use on potato storage and equipment surfaces.

Most disinfesting materials require that treated surfaces remain wet for up to ten minutes to assure the death of residual bacterial and fungal spores. The addition of a wetting agent to the spray solution may aid in keeping surfaces moist for the required period. When disinfesting solutions are used for dipping knives, crates, picking baskets or foot dip tanks, the solution should be changed frequently to avoid neutralization. Residual slime from ring rot has been found to survive for up to seven years on protected wooden surfaces. Therefore, steam or pressure washing prior to disinfesting is critical where exposure to ring rot contamination is known to have occurred. It is very difficult to kill ring rot bacteria in contaminated burlap bags. Preferably, contaminated bags should be burned. Do not reuse contaminated bags for handling seed potatoes.

Chemical: Other bleach products

Remarks: Use on machinery only. May be used as a surface disinfestant to precleaned machinery. Soil contamination or dirty water will greatly reduce the efficacy.

Trade Name	Rate of product	Comments
5.25% chlorine bleach solutions: Clorox)	1 gal per 10 gal water	

Chemical: Quaternary Ammonium Compounds

Remarks: For use on storage floors, walls, bin boards, bulkheads, crates, bulk bodies, conveyers, baskets, machinery and bags. Preclean area prior to disinfesting.

Trade Name	Rate of product	Comments
Ster-Bac	1 oz per 2 gal	

Chemical: Hydrogen peroxide and peroxyacetic acid:

Remarks: May be used as a surface disinfestant to precleaned areas. Soil contamination or dirty water will greatly reduce the efficacy.

StorOx 2.0	1.3 oz per gallon
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