

Fuchsia Gall mite

Aculops fuchsiae Keifer

Pest Information Series Sheet

What is it?

Aculops fuchsiae Keifer (fuchsia gall mite) is an EU quarantine pest specifically regulated on Fuchsia plants for planting. It causes severe distortion to Fuchsia, particularly the growing points and is very difficult to control once it has become established. The South American mite is present in Brazil, USA, and more recently Germany, France, the Channel Islands and the UK.



Symptoms of fuchsia gall mite Source: FERA

What are its hosts?

Fuchsia including at least three species (*F. arborescens*, *F. magellanica*, *F. procumbens*) and over 30 cultivars. There is considerable variation in susceptibility and two species (*F. microphylla* subsp. *microphylla*, *F. thymifolia*) and seven cultivars have been noted as being highly resistant to *A. fuchsiae*.

What are its symptoms?

Infestation causes rusting and deformation of the leaves, growths (galls) becoming grotesquely swollen, blistered and often reddened. The leaf galls are said to resemble those of peach leaf curl (*Taphrina deformans*). Later, the flowers become deformed and eventually all new growth ceases. Examination with a hand lens will reveal the yellowish fusiform mites, with only two pairs of legs conspicuously visible, among the leaf hairs and deformed tissues.

How does the Pest spread?

On plants in the field, dispersal can be expected to be principally by wind and, over larger distances, by insects, especially bees. Human factors including the movement of infested plants and cuttings are also important given the ease of vegetative propagation in fuchsias.

Action following discovery of *Aculops fuchsiae*

Aculops fuchsiae is listed in Annex II/AI of the Plant Health directive 2000/29/EC. This means that its introduction and spread is banned by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food if found on certain plants or plant products, specifically *Fuchsia* plants intended for planting.

What can you do?

The following measures should be implemented to prevent the introduction/spread of this pest:

- Always notify DAFF if importing *Fuchsia* from a Third Country and ensure that the consignment is accompanied by an appropriate Phytosanitary Certificate.
- Always seek guarantees from suppliers regarding the health of the plants.
- Refrain from taking cuttings of *Fuchsia* from non nursery locations especially from countries where the pest has been found, (Germany, Channel Islands, France and UK).
- Suspected outbreaks or interceptions of *Fuchsia* gall mite on growing plants should be reported immediately to your local Plant Health Inspector.

Action in the event of suspect cases:

Suspected outbreaks or interceptions of *Fuchsia* gall mite on growing plants should be reported immediately to your local Plant Health Inspector or contact:



Fuchsia Gall mite

Source: FERA

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Further symptoms and information on the pest can be viewed on the website of the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EPPO): www.eppo.org